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CHURCH

BY THE REV. J. H. B. B. B. B.

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THOUGHTS
ON THE
ANGLICAN AND ANGLO-AMERICAN
CHURCHES.

BY JOHN BRISTED,

COUNSELLOR AT LAW,

AUTHOR OF "THE RESOURCES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE," AND OF "THE
RESOURCES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

——— *Manet altâ Mente repostum. Virgil.*

Εκ των θειων γραφων θεολογουμεν και θελωσιν οι εχθροι, και μη. *Chrysostom.*

Study, without prayer, is *atheism*—prayer, without study, is *presumption*.

Bishop Sanderson.

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THOUGHTS

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following pages are intended, merely, as the herald of a more extended and minute inquiry into the *causes* of the present *positive* and *relative* weakness and inefficiency of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches; notwithstanding their external advantages, and their truly *evangelical* liturgy, articles, and homilies, the precious legacy of those blessed reformers and martyrs, who sealed the constancy of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by the pouring out of their own life-blood.

All *personal* and *party* feelings are distinctly disclaimed; the *only* object being to exhibit the causes, and to point out the remedy of those evils, which have too long marred the beauty and blasted the usefulness of two most important sections of the Christian Church.

I was induced to examine the *effects* of the English national church establishment, in consequence of being referred, in the winter of 1821-2, to Mr. Wilks's work on "Correlative Claims and Duties," by the editor of a most respectable, and truly evangelical, religious journal, published in London. My attention was particularly directed to that portion of Mr. Wilks's

book, in which a most deplorable picture of the condition of religion in these United States is drawn; and the evil accounted for, by the *want of a church and state establishment* in this country.

JOHN BRISTED.

New-York, September, 1822.

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THOUGHTS

ON THE

ANGLICAN AND AMERICAN-ANGLO-CHURCHES.

INTRODUCTION.

HUMANLY speaking, I have a kind of hereditary and family claim to be enrolled among the advocates of all that vitally concerns the well-being of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whether it be that established in England, or its legitimate offspring located in these United States.

My father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were all beneficed clergymen in the Church of England. My elder brother is so now; and I was myself, according to the custom of men, under that national establishment, marked out for the clerical calling from my very birth. It was, in truth, the dearest wish of my most venerable father's heart, that *all* his sons should be devoted to the ministry of reconciliation. For this his prayers were ever on the wing to the Throne of Grace, but he died without receiving a full answer to his petitions. His youngest son, while yet scarcely ripening into manhood, perished in the navy; his second boy embraced a civil occupation; and his eldest born, alone, waits upon the stately steppings of Jehovah, in the Sanctuary.

What tribute of affection and of gratitude shall I render unto thee, my father and my friend, my guardian and my guide?

In all the stages and departments of this ever-changing scene of life, my sainted sire bore his faculties

meekly and well. As a son, he was obedient, dutiful, affectionate; as a brother, kind, tender, protecting; as a husband, indulgent, gentle, devoted; as a father, benignant, liberal, abounding in all good; as a friend, faithful, generous, constant; as a public magistrate, upright, just and pure; as a man, high in talent, extensive in learning, fertile in wisdom, eloquence and wit; in social intercourse, the delight and joy of every one. And above all, as a minister of the Gospel, he was sincere and zealous in the discharge of the duties of his highest, holiest, best vocation; loyal and true to his great Master, the Captain of Salvation; a plain, perspicuous, powerful preacher of the doctrines of grace to his flock; in his parish a faithful pastor, visiting his people from house to house, and ever administering to their spiritual needs and earthly wants; a most merciful parent to the poor and destitute. In fine, so happily tempering the blaze of genius with the milder and more heavenly lustre of the Christian graces, meekness, forbearance, patience, charity, that he won the affection, esteem, respect and reverence of all who knew him.

In early life, he distinguished himself as an accomplished classical scholar; he bore away, also, one of the highest mathematical honours at Cambridge, as second *wrangler* of his year. Fully fitted by his talents, his connexions, his acquisitions, his accomplishments, his fortune, to mingle with and mount in the tumultuous intercourses and conflicts of the world, he preferred the calm, sequestered vale of life, to all the excitements of ambition, the seductions of pleasure, the temptations of wealth. He held on the noiseless tenor of his way as an humble parish priest, watching over and labouring for the best, the everlasting interests of a plain unlettered peasantry.

In his life he exemplified the blessed influences of the doctrines of the Cross; and in his death, he bore the fullest testimony that faith, undivided faith in the *free* and finished salvation, the gratuitous, unmerited, sovereign mercy, the infinite sacrifice, the all-sufficient righteousness, the all-prevailing intercession of the

Lord Jesus Christ, as the *only* foundation of present peace and future hope, and eternal bliss; utterly casting away every reliance upon the wretched, helpless works of human frailty and imperfection, is the *alone* sure and steadfast anchor of the soul in that awful hour of earthly dissolution, when man sinks from all that he sees and knows, into all that lies hidden behind the veil of unrevealed futurity.

May I, and mine, die the death of the righteous; and may *our* last end be like his!

The importance of a faithful and zealous parish priest to the Church of Christ, in particular, and to the community generally, is *not* sufficiently appreciated nor understood. Some, laying too much stress upon preaching only, and others relying too much upon mere forms of prayer, leave parochial visitation to be performed or not, as inclination may direct, or opportunity offer, or caprice dictate.

The *collegiate* system, still adopted by too many of the American churches, which consists in making two or more clergymen tenants in common of several congregations, precludes the power of performing regular pastoral duty. And the *formalists*, who make up an awfully numerous part of every Christian community, and are, without peradventure, the most pernicious of all the enemies of *spiritual* religion, are generally apt to think the pastoral visits of their minister quite a work of supererogation, and to insist that a little thin, diluted sabbatical morality, a miserable deterioration of heathen ethics, of the unsanctioned codes of Plato, or Epictetus, or Seneca, is abundantly sufficient to carry both parson and people to heaven; in direct contradiction to the whole tenor of those sacred Scriptures, which they seldom hear, and still more seldom read.

Let it not be deemed harsh and uncharitable to say, that formalists are enemies to spiritual religion in Christian countries, and in this enlightened era of the world. For, although civilization may alter habits, it does *not* change the heart; and the experience of every day shows, that men of decent exterior and punctual ob-

servers of all the forms and ordinances of their own particular Church, are as bitter persecutors, to the extreme extent of their power, of all evangelical piety, as the most open and shameless profligates can be. The *natural* enmity of the heart against God, and the things of God, is as fierce and unrelenting at this moment, as it was when the Scriptures first announced the awful and humiliating truth.

The whole history of the Christian Church, from the advent of the Messiah to the present hour, proves, that without a *stated* ministry, and a regular performance of pastoral duty, no congregation ever *can* be built up in spiritual growth and holiness. A clergyman may preach ably, pray earnestly, expound instructively, and yet, without parochial visitation, be lamentably deficient in feeding the flock committed to his charge. No Christian community can be bound up and consolidated in its most valuable, its immortal interests, unless the minister gives continually a sound exposition of the Holy Scriptures, trains up the youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, carries the law and the Gospel home to the business and the bosoms of all his hearers, and enforces the duty and discipline of personal prayer and domestic worship in every family of his flock.

There are a thousand avenues of conviction to the sinner's heart, which no public instruction from the pulpit can reach. Innumerable difficulties to be solved, and cases of conscience to be explained, which are too minute and too subtle to be comprehended or touched by any course of general ministration. The adaptation of Scriptural truth to many particular circumstances of individual need, can only take place in the familiar conversation of private and friendly intercourse. The hearts of the people are most effectually subdued by a faithful correspondence between the pastor's practice and the preacher's doctrine.

By pastoral vigilance and prudence only, are often to be prevented or checked, the beginnings of those abuses and scandals, which, when unrestrained, defy

the interposition of ecclesiastical tribunals, disgrace the Church, and injure the community. How are the children, the rising hope of every congregation, to learn to look up to their minister as to their spiritual father, except by frequent pastoral intercourse? And how is the clergyman himself to become acquainted with the actual state of his flock, their individual, their family, their social religion and morals, if he only sees them gathered together once in the week to listen to his pulpit discourses? How are the feeble to be strengthened, the thoughtless admonished, the drooping cheered, the hasty restrained, the poor comforted, the sick soothed, the dying supported, but by the voice, the smile, the tears, the prayers of their pastor; all pointing to the one great sacrifice for sin; to faith in Christ Jesus; a living faith, evidenced by a renewed heart and a holy life, regulated by the commandments of God's own revealed word?

An able and an eloquent preacher may command the respect and admiration of his audience; but the gratitude, the affection, the tenderness of an attached people, are never given, save to the conscientious, vigilant, wise and faithful pastor.

The difference between the cold, listless formality of those wretched flocks, who, for lack of pastoral care, look up to their negligent shepherds, and are *not* fed—and the lively, constantly growing spiritual-mindedness of those congregations who are blessed alike with the public labours and parochial visitations of *evangelical* ministers, is immense and awful. The first, even at the best, only add a heap of dull hypocrisy to the huge mass of iniquity which is always festering in its own corruption in a world that lieth in wickedness; that is bursting with sin and sorrow; that drives on its unreflecting course without God, and without Christ, and without hope; while the others are salient, living springs of health and life to all the surrounding community, who are checked by their reproofs, won by their kindness, enlightened by their admonitions, improved by their example.

If I am not deceived in that which the Holy Spirit has pronounced to be deceitful above all things, I would infinitely rather that a son of mine should be a faithful, zealous, devoted parish priest, than the sovereign of an extended empire.

The venerable Thomas Scott, not long before he died, said—"The work of the ministry appears to me so great, that nothing else, comparatively, seems worth doing. Christ would not lead an army, nor divide an inheritance, nor be made a king, nor sit in the great council of the nation; but he *would* preach the Gospel to the poor."

In order to lay the basis of a liberal education, I was sent, while yet quite a child, to Winchester college, which then, under the auspices of its head-master, the Reverend Dr. Joseph Warton, of classical and poetical memory, was reputed to be one of the best of the great public schools in England. During the year in which I was candidate for admission, there were forty applicants, and only three vacancies; but through the nomination and influence of a clerical brother of Sir William Blackstone, the celebrated commentator upon the Laws of England, I gained admittance, as an *Alumnus* of St. Mary's college, Winton.

At Winchester, as at Eton and Westminster, two junior seminaries which derive their forms and models of instruction from Winchester, every effort is directed to make the boys good classical scholars; to render them familiar with the best writers of Greece and Rome, and to teach them a facility of composition, both prose and verse, in the English, Latin, and Greek languages. But how far the formal routine of the chapel prayers and cathedral services, repeated so often on the week-days, Saints'-days, and Sundays; the indiscriminate admission to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper of all the boys in the sixth form, as a matter of course, without any previous knowledge of, or inquiry into, their spiritual state; together with a pretty general negligence, on the part of the Warden, Masters and Fellows of the college, as to the tone of morals prevail-

ing among the students, is calculated to promote the cause of religion, more especially as by far the greater portion of the boys on the "*foundation*" of these distinguished institutions, are regularly trained in them to become clergymen in the Anglican Church, has long been doubted by many of the ablest, best informed, and most pious men in the British empire.

Some years since, the Bishop of Meath, and the Rev. Dr. Rennell, Master of the Temple, very forcibly stated to the public their objections, not merely to the total absence of all evangelical instruction in these great seminaries; but also to their perpetual tendency to promote irreligion and immorality. They were answered in an able and temperate manner by Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster, author of the *Voyage of Nearchus*, and at that time head-master of Westminster school. The more serious part of the people of England, of every religious denomination, are convinced, that the objections of the Irish Prelate and the English Master of the Temple, in relation to the neglect of religious and moral instruction in the great public schools of England, have *not* been sufficiently refuted.

On this momentous subject, embracing the course and conduct of so large a portion of the English national clergy, the reader will find much to interest and instruct him, in the *Christian Observer* for 1811. In reviewing Dr. Ireland's "*Lectures on Paganism and Christianity compared*," to the King's scholars at Westminster, high praise is bestowed on the talents and learning of the reverend author, whose work is ranked with Leland's valuable treatise on the necessity and importance of a Divine revelation; and with Brucker's elaborate *History of Philosophy*; or, at least, with Dr. Enfield's able abridgement of that voluminous work.

The *Christian Observer*, however, as becomes the faithful champion of evangelical truth, remarks, that, throughout these lectures, this delusive and dangerous error seems to be implied, that the mere *speculative* conviction of the truth of Christianity, and the bare profession of it, are all that is required;—or rather, that

every *nominal* is a *real* Christian. By this want of discrimination between real and nominal Christians, between the bare profession and the practical feeling of the Gospel, which is of the very essence of *formalism*, a delusive satisfaction is produced in those accustomed to hear religion thus imperfectly represented, which seldom fails to render them zealous for the form, and careless of the power of godliness.

In the same volume of the Christian Observer a correspondent calls our attention to another religious publication, intended to edify the same class of young men. It is entitled "Sacred Exercises, in four books, for the use of places of education, particularly Westminster school."

The prayers and collects of this manual of devotion exhibit a strange medley; and it is not easy to say on *what* system of divinity the whole is founded; some things appearing orthodox, others the reverse. For instance—"Let us, after the example of Peter, labour, most abundantly, to make *atonement* for our sins." Ought the Westminster, or any other scholars, to be taught such doctrine as this? Let Dr. Ireland, or any other dignitary of the Anglican Church, answer. Yet *such* theology must be in good odour among the English public schools; for these "Sacred Exercises" had actually reached a sixth edition, so long since as the year 1792.

Such *unscriptural* doctrine, however, sometimes receives the authority of a much higher order of divines than the dismal compiler of this Westminster manual; for Bishop Jeremy Taylor himself talks of "our sighs atoning for our little sins, and our tears washing away our greater sins." And a strong squint towards this tenet is betrayed in the thirteenth hymn, appended by the authority of the General Convention of the American-Anglo-Church, to David's Psalms in the Common Prayer Book. The title of the hymn is "the Christian's Hope;" it contains these lines;—

"But thou hast told the troubled mind,
Who does her sins lament;
The timely tribute of *her* tears
Shall endless woe prevent."

All which is in direct opposition to the evangelical doctrines of plenary atonement, and free salvation, made and effected by Christ himself.

In the Christian Observer for 1820, a correspondent notices the deplorable deficiency of religious instruction in the English public schools. He allows, that the perusal of the classic authors of antiquity tends to enlarge the ideas, and to form a correct style; but insists, that youth need to have pointed out to them the improprieties of the heathen system, and the infinite superiority of the Christian revelation; objects acknowledged to be of primary importance by Dean Vincent, in his well known pamphlet. It is right to inform the pupils, that heathen writers are *not* the models on which their characters, as men and Christians, must be formed; and that, though classical literature may furnish the understanding, or form the taste, it will neither regulate the affections, nor improve the conduct.

But what *direct* religious instruction is afforded in these public schools? Young men, generally, leave them with very imperfect notions even of the first principles of Christianity. Children, in the national and Sunday schools, are, for the most part, better grounded in the elements of revelation, than these embryo bishops, judges, and statesmen. Youth is the most favourable season for inculcating religious principles; and if this important duty were performed in the great schools, the Anglican Church would exhibit a far greater number of *true* friends; of men exhibiting that they have religion really at heart, and pulling down the strong holds of dissent by the relentless warfare of a pure, evangelical faith, and a holy, consistent life.

Fagging, or *shagging*, as it is called at Winchester, is a system of slave trade, and corrupts the heart, by sowing in it the seeds of tyranny and servility; two poisonous plants, extremely adverse to the growth of the Christian religion.

The habits formed in the public schools, are car-

ried to the universities, whose discipline they generally render ineffectual. Indeed, the *foundation*-scholars, who *speed*, receive an ample provision, independently of their conduct at Oxford or Cambridge, or their application to study. Presently these men enter the established church, which is thus, as well as by other means, constantly supplied with a shoal of secular, self-indulgent, formal clergy, whose religion consists mainly in railing at dissenters, and in calumniating and persecuting all evangelism within the pale of the hierarchy.

I had been at Winchester but little more than three years, and had ascended from the lowest class up to nearly the head of the senior part of the fifth form, when a general rebellion against the severe and capricious authority of Dr. Huntingford, then only Warden, now both Warden of Winchester college, and bishop of Hereford, broke out among the gownsmen, or students, on William of Wykeham's foundation. This rebellion was headed, and the oath of universal conspiracy administered, by Richard Mant, then one of the prefects in the sixth form, and now a protestant champion of the popish doctrine of *baptismal* regeneration, and one of the editors of Mant & Doyley's Family Bible.

In order to set an example of vigorous discipline, the Warden and Fellows of Winchester, after an express pledge on their part to bury the whole under an act of general amnesty, expelled the first forty boys who stood senior on the college rolls. Although much too young, and somewhat too small, at that time, to render any very efficient aid in a riot which proceeded so far as to lock up the Warden, Masters and Fellows in their own respective apartments; to expel the cooks, butlers, porters, bell-ringers, and other servants from their habitations; to shut the college-gates, mount the watch-towers, and defy the Marquis of Buckingham's militia, drawn out and paraded to terrify the insurgents; I yet participated in this paternal benediction; my name happening to stand the twenty-first on the roll, from that of the head-boy, who was then prefect of the hall.

Dr. Huntingford is said to have written, in the true

spirit of primitive Christianity, a circular to the heads of houses in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, containing the names of those boys whom he had expelled from Winchester, and requesting that not one of them might be admitted as a student in any English college.

This benevolent request, breathing perpetual perdition against youthful offenders, who had been already punished to the extremest verge of scholastic vengeance, in the loss of the large sums expended in their education, and in the being shut out, for ever, from all participation in the prospective emoluments and honours attached to one of the wealthiest and most ancient institutions in England, was, in general, disregarded by the Cambridge and Oxford dignitaries, who permitted the ejected alumni of Saint Mary Winton to matriculate with them,

Of these, one, at least, has lived to seat himself upon the same Episcopal bench with my lord of Hereford. His old friend Richard Mant, who led the Winchester rebellion, has been recently transmuted into an Irish bishop by the British government. This divine has atoned for all the sins of youth, his defiance of Warden Huntingford's authority, as well as some other errors, by the parturition of a pamphlet, announcing the regeneration of *all* children episcopally baptized; leaving, as a matter of course, the rest of the human race to the "*uncovenanted mercies*" of Archdeacon Daubeney.

Whatever might be the effect upon others, certain it is, that the serious impressions caused by the religious education given by my revered parents to all their children, were very considerably diminished in me. The daily study of the Scriptures, so fervently and so frequently enjoined upon me by my sainted father, had been grievously intermitted; and the poets, orators, and historians of Greece and Rome had shouldered out the Oracles of God. A few years of residence under the parental roof, aided by the kindness, vigilance and wisdom of my unequalled sire, served to restore the equilibrium between sacred and profane studies. Until

I was seventeen, my steps were steadily directed towards an entrance into the vestibule of the Church of England.

Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days shalt thou find it, is a direct encouragement to pious parents to breed up their children religiously; to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; seeing also, that the blessing is promised to believers and to their *seed*.

The excellent and eminent Dr. Doddridge, in his very interesting account of Col. Gardiner, says, that “the colonel’s mother took care to instruct him, with great tenderness and affection, in the principles of true Christianity. And, although the good effects of her prudent and exemplary care were *not* so conspicuous as she wished and hoped, in the younger part of her son’s life; yet there is great reason to believe they were not entirely lost. As they were, probably, the occasion of many convictions, which, in his younger years, were overborne; so, I doubt not, that when religious impressions took that strong hold of his heart, which they afterwards did, that stock of knowledge which had been so early laid up in his mind, was found of considerable service. And I have heard him make the observation, as an encouragement to parents and other pious friends to do *their* duty; and to hope for those good consequences of it, which may not immediately appear.”

Train up a child in the way he should go—says Solomon, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—and when he is old he will not depart from it. It is an important fact, that the Church of Christ is mainly supplied from the families of *believers*. In some few instances, to be sure, the children of pious parents, in spite of a religious education, turn out profligates, to the great scandal of religion, and the vehement delight of infidels. But this very fact proves the benefit of a pious education; for the clamour raised when any one so educated becomes profligate, shows the inconsistency of the result with the premises, and that a conclusion

quite the reverse was *expected*; whereas the profligacy of infidels, and of irreligious worldlings, creates no surprise; because it is the natural fruit, the legitimate consequence of *their* principles.

Occasionally, also, some individuals are taken from out of the world which lieth in wickedness, arrested in their career of sin, plucked as brands from the burning, and turned from the error of their ways unto the wisdom of the just; exhibiting, in themselves, signal evidences of the sovereignty of Divine grace. This was emphatically displayed in the remarkable conversions of Col. Gardiner, of the late John Newton, and of the illustrious Missionary, Vanderkemp.

But, generally speaking, the great body of pious people, all over the world, consists of those who have been brought up from the earliest infancy in habits of seriousness; in the constant use of the appointed means of grace; as the daily study of the Scriptures, with prayer for the promised teachings of the Spirit, in order rightly to understand, apply and practise their precepts; the conscientious exercise of private, family and social prayer; regular attendance upon the services of the Sanctuary;—in a word, the habitual use of *all* the means of grace, enjoined by Jehovah upon his people, as a duty; and upon the faithful use of which he has promised his blessing.

At all events, it behoves those parents and guardians, who hope to give a good account of their important stewardship at that great and awful day, when the Almighty Judge of the quick and the dead shall assign to each individual of the assembled universe his eternal and irreversible portion, conscientiously to discharge *their* duty; and impart to the children committed to their care, the inestimable privilege of a religious education; and having done that, to leave the event to God, in whose hands alone are the issues of life and death.

Mr. Biddulph, in his “Inconsistency of conformity to this world with a profession of Christianity,” says—whether the consciences of many professing parents are

free from the guilt incurred by Eli, must be left to the determination of the individuals concerned in the inquiry. Power is lodged in the hands of parents by the great Lord of all, to be employed, like every other talent, to the glory of God, and the advantage of those committed to their care. In this day, neither parents nor children seem duly sensible of the extent of parental authority; of the awful responsibility of the parent respecting its exercise, nor of the obedience due to it by the child. The reins of domestic discipline are held too slightly, and too early are given up, even in professing families.

These considerations involve one of the crying sins prevalent in the religious world at this era, and threaten the most fatal consequences to society, and to the Church of God. Whether many Christian parents, whose children are irreligious or profligate, may not be implicated in their children's guilt, by the defect of early restraint and instruction, is a solemn question. The word of God has laid down a general rule on this subject, in which, though there may be exceptions, as in other general rules, something must be implied.

On the story of Eli, Mr. Scott, in his Commentary, says, the neglect of properly educating children, and the indulgence of their wayward inclinations, is a sin, which God severely chastises in his own people; because it seems to imply a contempt of His authority and special favour, and a disregard to His glory, as well as to their immortal souls; and because it tends to the most fatal abuses and apostacies.

Mr. Simeon, in his fifty-fifth Homily, says, that under the Law, on all the different occasions, it was appointed that children should make inquiries into the reasons of the various institutions which they saw; and that such explanations should be given them, as should tend to perpetuate divine knowledge to the remotest generations. Such inquiries we should encourage amongst *our* children, and cheerfully embrace every opportunity of instructing them in the things belonging to their eternal peace. If such catechetical instructions were given in our different families, to how much

greater advantage would the Word of Life be dispensed ! Our hearers then, being habituated to the consideration of Divine truths, would enter more easily into the various subjects set before them. They would attend with pleasure and profit, more especially when arrived at years of discretion ; whereas *now*, the greater part of our auditories hear as if they heard not, and continue years under the ministry of the Gospel, *without* ever understanding its fundamental truths.

At the age of seventeen, in several conversations with the Rev. Dr. Septimus Collinson, Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, my resolution as to taking orders was considerably shaken. The main substance of the learned Provost's arguments, in order to dissuade me from entering the Church, was, that as all the livings in the establishment were under the control of patronage, public or private ; either ministerial, as representing the government, or lay, as belonging to individual noblemen and gentlemen ; or clerical, as vested in single bishops or in religious bodies ; a man's location or ascent in the national Church did *not* depend exclusively, or chiefly, or, probably, at all, upon *his own* talents, learning and character ; but upon some extrinsic influence, some remote contingencies and probabilities, over which he had no control.

In addition to which, he represented the clerical market in England as being overstocked ; the number of parishes and church benefices bearing no reasonable proportion to the multitudes of the national clergy. Whence, he concluded, that either of the other learned professions, whether law or physic, would be preferable for a young man to pursue, as rendering him in a greater degree the master and carver out of his own fortunes.

All these, and other similar observations, to be sure, bore only a secular aspect, and had nothing to do with preaching the Gospel, either to the poor or to the rich ; yet, falling from the lips of a clergyman high in the establishment, advanced in years, and distinguished for his talents and learning, made a deep and lasting

impression upon my unexperienced, unballasted mind; and induced me to relinquish all thoughts of the church, and embrace the calling of a physician.

My ever to be revered father was exceedingly grieved at this determination, but did not oppose it, because he thought, most justly, that the fact of my pausing as to a preference of *any other* vocation, was full proof of my unfitness to enter upon the ministry of reconciliation. His prayers and tears, however, were, to the last hour of his lengthened life, continually rising up before Jehovah's awful throne, that his wilful boy might yet be brought, by the blessed influences of the Spirit of God, to see and feel the infinite superiority of faithfully proclaiming the doctrines of the cross to any mere worldly vocation. And he solemnly enjoined me, in whatever calling I might finally settle down, and where-soever I might be ultimately situated, to set apart some portion of every day for the study of the Scriptures, and commentaries, and systems of divinity, and books in any way calculated to explain or illustrate the Word of God.

My objections to the Church of England were then, and are now, confined exclusively to her *political* position; her close alliance with the state; her system of patronage, whether lay or clerical, excluding the congregations altogether from any choice of the clerk, who is to minister to them spiritually; and her provision of tithes. Her liturgy, articles, and homilies, are all strictly spiritual; and when faithfully set forth, and supported by the preaching and living of evangelical clergymen, are eminently calculated, under the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, to call men from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

My kingdom is *not* of this world, emphatically declares the Lord Jesus Christ. But bishop Warburton, with all his immense talents and exhaustless ingenuity, urges the position, that the Church and the State, in England, are, in themselves, two free and independent sovereigns, and *as such*, form a mutual, equal alliance and league between each other; in the same manner as

is, or might be, done between any two other earthly potentates.

But, without encountering any detail, we may simply ask, *who* is the head of this independent, sovereign church? The Lord Jesus Christ himself. And *does He* enter into an equal, mutual alliance, offensive and defensive, with impious, irreligious, profligate, formal sovereigns? for example, with the brutal, bloody Henry—the politic, arbitrary Elizabeth; or the perfidious persecuting dynasty of the Stuarts? *Utrum horum malis, accipe.* Which will ye believe? The Saviour himself, who says his kingdom is not of this world, or the right reverend William Warburton, who seeks to stamp the secular stain upon its beauty of holiness?

In addition to this, the political wisdom of excluding every other religious denomination, except the dominant sect, from an equal participation in the rights, privileges and offices of government, is more than doubtful. This policy proscribes, and thus renders useless, if not hostile, at least *one-third* of the talent, learning, piety and efficiency of the whole empire. Mr. Bates, a loyal adherent to the British government, and a sound churchman withal, in his valuable work called “Christian Politics,” recommends, that, while the Anglican church should be protected in all her present emoluments, benefices and dignities, the partition wall between her and the other denominations should be so far thrown down, as to admit every religious persuasion, throughout the empire, to an equal share in the offices of government, whether civil or military; giving to all the citizens equal political rights and privileges, and allowing to the national church the exclusive enjoyment of her revenues and ecclesiastical prerogatives.

It is not easy to find a valid reason why Britain should not repeal her *Test* and *Corporation* acts; laws passed amidst the heat and smoke of religious intolerance and persecution. She has already done it, with signal success, in relation to her Irish protestant dis-

senters. And why not extend the boon to all the dissenting sects throughout the nation; and thus, indefinitely, augment her own intellectual and moral power, by permitting *all*, instead of only a privileged order of her people, to serve, aid and support her, to the full extent of their capacity and powers, in her civil and military functions; in the field and on the flood; in foreign courts, and in her home councils and cabinet?

Other countries have learned this lesson of practical political wisdom. In these United States, every religious communion is placed on equal ground, as to all civil rights and privileges. By a provision of the federal constitution, the general government is interdicted from regulating or interfering with the religion of the Union; and the separate states, for the most part, have confined their legislative enactments to the mere civil incorporation, with certain restrictions, of such religious bodies as apply for charters. In the United Netherlands, in Prussia, in Russia, nay, even in France, there is no exclusive national church, shutting out the other sects from equal political privileges; but in those countries all religious denominations stand on the same level of social claim and right.

During the time when Russia broke down the military strength of revolutionary France, the commander in chief of all her armies belonged to the communion of the Greek Church; her minister of finance was a protestant, and her premier, a papist. Her affairs, civil and military, were not the worse conducted, in her agonizing struggle for existence, because she disfranchises none of her people of their political rights, on account of their religious opinions or belief.

But the ministerial and lay *patronage* of the Anglican Church is subject to a much higher and more awful objection than the mere want of political wisdom, in shutting out, for ever, so much talent, learning and efficiency from the service of the state. It almost of necessity ensures a constant supply of *formalism*, at least, if not of absolute irreligion, to the clerical establishment.

Under this national system, boys are regularly bred up to the Church, as to any secular calling; for instance, the army, or navy, or law, or physic, or merchandize; and are thus continually thrust into the priest's office for a morsel of bread, in defiance of the denunciations of Scripture. If a father, or uncle, or more distant relation, or friend, or acquaintance, or the government, have a valuable living, well endowed with ample tithes, to dispose of, the fortunate clerk for whom it is designed is forthwith inducted, without the shadow of an inquiry into his fitness for so sacred, so momentous a charge, as that of professing to minister to the spiritual wants of perishing sinners. His piety, talents, learning, industry and aptness for pulpit exercises and pastoral duty, are all taken for granted; and a whole congregation of immortal souls are transferred, like so many cattle, to the ghostly care of a man, who probably never has seen, nor ever intends to see them; but consigns them and their everlasting interests to the supervision of some under-paid curate.

Suppose, what *has* happened in English history, that the British Prime Minister, and the Lord High Chancellor of England, who share between them the whole enormous church patronage of the crown, including the making of bishops, should be both, or either of them, avowed infidels, or merely irreligious, secular and formal —. What sort of bishops would be appointed to fill the vacant sees? What kind of clergy to possess the empty parishes? Evangelical men, think you, imitators and followers of the holy Apostles, and primitive pastors, or smooth, courtly, pliant politicians, and careless, irreligious, immoral clerks?

The individual lay-patrons, also, whether noble or gentle, put into the livings in their gift, either gratuitously or by open sale in the market, as of any other estates, the sale of church-livings being advertised in the English newspapers as the sales of negro slaves are advertised in our American journals, pastors of their own choice or price. In the election, or call of these pastors, the people composing the congregation have

neither voice, nor part, nor lot; but, nevertheless, are required to pay them tithes, and sit, either under their ministration, or that of some stipendiary substitute.

Waiving, for the present, all remark about the barter and sale of church-livings, and the patronage of bishops, and other clerical corporations, which must ever bear the hue and colouring, religious or irreligious, of the patron's own sentiments; let us advert, for a moment, to the regular and ordinary course of lay-patronage.

If the lay-patron be *not* religious himself, and it is no want of charity to suppose that some of them steer quite clear of all evangelism, the probability is that the incumbent, placed in a living by him, will, also, not be too well acquainted with, nor be very deeply interested in, the propagation of the all-important truths and doctrines involved in the stupendous scheme of human redemption, as revealed in Holy Writ. And perhaps few things are better calculated to foster the growth of *infidelity*, and its inseparable adjuncts, discontent, radicalism and rebellion, in a country, than the foisting into *any* church, but more especially into a national establishment, men who dole out only a little thin, diluted, unsubstantial morality, once in seven days, made up of shreds and patches from mere ethical writers, whether ancient or modern; instead of regularly expounding the great statute-book of Christianity, and habitually inculcating the essential, the characteristic, the distinguishing doctrines and practical duties of the everlasting Gospel.

And yet, while so large a proportion of the English national clergy are *now*, and have been for several generations past, starving their flocks upon the husks of *formalism*, grave personages of all ages and aspects, profess to marvel at the rapid decline and diminution of the national church, and the portentous growth of other religious denominations, whose pastors, on moderate stipends, perform faithfully and successfully, the all-important duties of the highest, holiest, most interesting, most useful vocation that *can* be accorded to man. To which add the awful increase of seditious and

revolutionary movements among the irreligious part of the population, which frequent no place of worship, but by law belong to the establishment, which claims all not openly dissenting. It is simply impossible that such numerous hordes of radical banditti could be found to infest the peace and threaten the existence of all that is valuable in England, if the *eleven thousand* national clergy performed their duty, as it behoves evangelical ministers, who are faithful stewards of the mysteries of godliness, committed to their care.

The power vested in the crown of appointing all the bishops in the Church of England by the writ of *congé d'eslire*, or leave to choose, transmitted to the dean and chapter upon every episcopal vacancy, is, perhaps, still more objectionable; because it in effect vests in the existing cabinet ministers the creation of all those, who *ought* to be the evangelical guardians of their respective dioceses. How far men, so deeply immersed in mere political occupations and secular pursuits, as the cabinet ministers of England must always be, are fitted to select those best qualified to discharge the momentous spiritual duties of the episcopate, needs no discussion. That they do *not always* stumble upon men remarkable for their attachment to the truths and doctrines of the Bible, and of the liturgy, articles and homilies of the Anglican church, is manifest from their having made so many baptismal regeneration doctors, and double justification, and captious, sophistical question men, bishops of a *protestant* establishment.

The very preamble to the act of parliament, passed in the year 1786, under which the American bishops, Provost and White, were consecrated in England, shows how completely the election and consecration of English bishops are under the control of the crown. The preamble begins thus—"Whereas by the laws of this realm, no person can be consecrated to the office of a bishop, *without* the king's license for his election to that office, and the royal mandate, under the great seal, for his confirmation and consecration," &c.

“ If I am prejudiced at all—says Mr. Granville Sharp, in his ‘ Law of Retribution’—I am sure it is in favour of episcopacy ; for I not only entertain a most sincere personal respect and esteem for several truly worthy and learned individuals of that order now living, but I am even descended from one of the same holy function, (his grandfather, archbishop Sharp,) who, in his correspondence with foreign protestant Churches, very ably defended and promoted the establishment of episcopacy ; and above all, I am thoroughly convinced by the Holy Scriptures, that the institution of that order in the Christian Church is of God ; and that the only defect in the English Establishment of it, is the want of a *free* election to the office.

“ For as it may be proved, that the Churches of Britain and Ireland have a just and ancient right to elect their own bishops, and did actually exercise that right for many ages, till the antichristian usurpation of monks and popes, over the secular or parochial clergy, occasioned the interference of kings ; so it may be as clearly demonstrated, that the present mode of election, by writ of *congé d’eslire*, sent to the several cathedral chapters, together with a letter missive, containing the name of the person which they shall elect and choose, agreeably to the act of 25 Hen. VIII. c. 20. s. 4. is a total *perversion* of that just and ancient right above-mentioned, and is entirely destructive of all the desirable purposes of a free election.

“ This practice, however, cannot be censured in stronger terms than those in which it is expressly condemned by a subsequent act of parliament, 1 Ed. VI. c. 2.—though the former act is supposed to be still in force—viz. : ‘ the said elections be, in very deed, *no* elections, but only by a writ of *congé d’eslire*, have colours, shadows and pretences of elections, serving, nevertheless, to no purpose,’ &c.

“ If it had not been for this notorious defect in point of election, and the general idea of its consequences, I am persuaded that the late worthy primate of England

would not have found such opposition in his endeavours, some few years ago, to promote the establishment of episcopacy in America."

What this opposition to which Mr. Sharp alludes was, and what difficulties stood in the way of establishing bishops in this country, are minutely detailed by bishop White, in his "Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America."

In a long note, subjoined to the observations above cited, Mr. Sharp exhibits much learned lore in ecclesiastical antiquities and history, to prove that *election* was, in the primitive times of Christianity, the usual mode of elevation to the episcopal chair, throughout all Christendom; and that this election was made promiscuously by the *laity*, as well as by the clergy. But, afterwards, emperors, and kings, and popes, a most evangelical triumvirate, invaded the freedom of election, and usurped to themselves the power of appointing bishops, on their sole irresponsible authority; first excluding the laity, and then ousting the clergy from any share in the superseded elections.

By the fourth article of the constitution of the American-Anglo-Church, it is enacted, that the bishop, or bishops, in every state, shall be chosen agreeably to such rules as shall be fixed by the Convention, which consists of both laity and clergy, of that state. And the second canon ordains, that no diocese or state shall proceed to the election or appointment of a bishop, unless there be, at least, six officiating presbyters, or priests, residing therein, and who, agreeably to the canons of the Church, may be qualified to vote for a bishop; a majority of whom, at least, shall concur in such election.

At present there are *nine* bishops in the American-Anglo-Church, to wit, of the eastern diocese, including the states of Maine, New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, and Rhode-Island; of the states, respectively, of Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, and Ohio. There are two dioceses, the state of Delaware, and the

state of North Carolina, which have no bishops. Every state in the Union may become a diocese whenever its protestant episcopalians are sufficiently numerous, and deem it expedient.

The whole Church is governed by the General Convention, whose power pervades every diocese. It sits regularly once in three years ; but may be especially convened in the interval. It consists of an upper house, composed of all the existing bishops ; and of a lower house, containing a delegated portion of clergy and laity from each diocese. The state conventions are held, for the most part, annually in each diocese, and consist of clergy and lay-delegates from every separate congregation. These bodies legislate for their respective dioceses ; but their canons must not contradict the constitution of the general Church.

The liturgy, articles, and homilies of the Anglican Church are adopted, with some few slight, local alterations. No particular revenues are attached to the episcopate ; and the bishops, generally, are parish priests, in addition to their bishoprics. But efforts are making in several dioceses to raise a bishop's fund, in order to disengage the diocesan from parochial duty, and leave him at leisure to perform the services that are deemed more peculiarly episcopal. Archbishops there are none, nor prebendaries, nor deans, nor archdeacons, nor a long list of *et ceteras* to be found in the Anglican Church ; the only orders are three, bishops, presbyters, and deacons. The senior bishop presides in the house of bishops, during the session of the General Convention.

The parish priests are elected, according to the charters of the congregations. Some Churches choose their minister by the vestry, consisting of persons elected annually by the pew-holders. Others by ballot, the whole congregation voting. The bishops have no *direct* patronage—no livings in their gift. The clergy are settled by the choice or call of the people to whom they minister ; and the stipend is fixed by the compact between the pastor and the congregation ; and the com-

mon law enforces the fulfilment of this contract on both sides, whence all undue dependence of the clergy on the people is prevented.

The system of *tithes* in England, is, perhaps, the very worst possible mode of providing for the national clergy that could be devised. They impede the progress of agriculture, and create and keep alive perpetual dissensions between the parish priest and his own people; and maintain in a state of incessant exasperation all those other sects, who dissent from the doctrines or discipline of episcopacy.

The tithes take a tenth part of all the *gross* produce of the land, and consequently operate as a tax, oppressive in proportion to the amount of capital expended in cultivating, and not to the net profits of the produce of the land; whence they grow more and more grievous, as a country expends more and more capital in agriculture; and inflict a much greater proportional burden upon England now, when so vast an aggregate of farming capital is employed in that country, than when agriculture consisted chiefly in pasture, and little money was expended in culture or tillage.

The tithe system, in England, is almost as pernicious a pressure as the *poor* laws, the public debt, or the *game* laws; all of which are, in their nature and amount, singularly oppressive; and two of them tend directly to produce immorality, vice and crime. The tithes, in conjunction with the other property of the united Anglican and Hibernian churches, amount to an annual income of about ten millions sterling, nearly forty-five millions of dollars, equal to nearly *one-fourth* of the rental of England and Ireland. A state of things, in relation to ecclesiastical matters, not very widely differing from that represented by Lord Chatham, as taking place prior to the Reformation:—"this country, my lords, was at that time thus parcelled out; the king had a third of the land for his share; another third was divided among the barons; and the church, God bless it! took the remaining third to itself."

To the yearly revenues of the national church add eight millions sterling for poor rates, thirty-seven millions for the interest of the public debt, redeemed and unredeemed, and seventeen millions for government expenditure, amounting altogether to seventy-two millions of pounds sterling—about three hundred and fifty millions of dollars a year—averaging nearly eighteen dollars a head of public contribution, or tax, for each inhabitant of the British isles. In this estimate, the tax imposed by the *corn* laws of England, calculated at twenty-five millions sterling a year, is not included.

The only sure means of inducing the English people to bear such, or any other burdens patiently and cheerfully, is to diffuse evangelical truth and light among them; by which they will learn to see and to practise, alike their duty towards God and towards man. The prevalence of *formalism* in their churches, long continued, will infallibly produce a prevalence of irreligion, and discontent, and rebellion, which must eventually shatter to their foundations the united fabrics of church and state.

The tithe system, in Ireland, is still more oppressive than in England. Four-fifths of the population are papists; in many parishes all the people are Romanists, having no protestant minister residing among them; but the nominal parson, the incumbent, lives either in England or in France, or elsewhere, as suits his own convenience or inclination; and the tithe-proctor, in terrible unison with the middle man and the popish priest, grinds down the Irish farmer and peasant to the dust, and perpetuates their abject, hopeless poverty.

A very sensible and gentlemanly pamphlet, on the education of the peasantry of Ireland, apparently written by an Irishman, thoroughly attached to the British constitution and government, has been lately published. After exhibiting a spirited contrast between the condition of England and Scotland and that of Ireland, the author expressly charges, that of the two burdensome ecclesiastical establishments, one imparts little, the

other no instruction to the mass of the Irish people. Of course, it is the business of the popish priesthood *not* to instruct the people; and they *do* that part of their business most effectually.

The established protestant church in Ireland derives immense revenues from the *whole* population of the country, without distinction of sects, in the shape of tithes and other sources of income; but, avowedly, confines its instruction to a *very small* portion of the people. The author entertains but little hope of proselyting Irish papists, while the existing discouragements of the law continue to support the system of the Roman church. Let a wise system of policy abolish all political distinctions among the different religious sects in Ireland, and let the national clergy preach the Gospel faithfully, and no fear need be entertained but that real, evangelical protestantism, will make rapid and effectual headway in that hitherto benighted country.

The writer remarks, that in England there is no national clergyman without some congregation; but in Ireland, many of the established clergy have no congregation whatever; whence a character, merely *secular*, is impressed upon them, and they are, in effect, little else than decent country gentlemen, acting as justices of the peace, attending upon quarter-sessions, and county meetings, and living, in fact, like decorous laymen. Nay, it is stated, that sometimes these protestant clergymen “accumulate the incongruous honours, the splendid arrayment, the scarlet and the gold, and the glittering steel of a *yeomanry captain*.” We really think that this is pushing the church-militant a little too far.

It is superfluous to ask, if *such* a clerical system, proceeding thus, is likely to aid the cause of the protestant church, or evangelize papists?

The writer states, that not only no relation subsists between the popish population and the established clergy, but that even the protestant peasantry have little or no intercourse with them, *as pastors*; so alien from all clerical qualities and attributes are these ec-

clesiastical soldiers and magistrates. In some of the most popish parts of Ireland families of protestant peasants are scattered. These, though they may punctually attend the church, and though they may, all their lives long, profess an abhorrence of popery, yet in sickness, in the hour of death, when they look for that consolation, which the prejudices, antipathies, and partialities of this world can no longer bestow, they look only to the popish priest. He is sent for, and the dying man, rather than be without all spiritual aid—for expecting any attendance from the protestant incumbent is out of the question—*renounces* the religion which, perhaps, he yet prefers, and dies a papist.

If such be the effect of the absence of every thing clerical in the character of the protestant clergy, what is to be expected, in the way of *spiritual* good, from the labours of the popish priesthood?

“The religion of the catholic priest is a religion of *forms*; it is overlaid with ritual and ceremonial observances, with various stated and indispensable matters of sacred routine and forms of prayer. Of these, every day brings its peculiar business and burden, its proper addition to the general mass. These occupy a large portion of time. It is true, they may be slurred over, they may be irreverently and rapidly disposed of, and from the necessity of the case, this often occurs: but still they are a wonderful incumbrance. They lie heavily upon the man, whose armour should fit him tight; who should be loaded with no unnecessary weight, and embarrassed with no unwieldy apparatus, when he goes forth to the active controversy, and the doubtful combat of both worlds.”

With a *formal* protestant clergy, and a popish priesthood combined, do we marvel at the state of Ireland?—at the abundance of crime, and violence, in a land yet showing the scars of civil war: poor, overtithed, overtaxed, and overrented; and oppressed with burdens; drained by absentees; without religious instruction or moral culture; without industry; and swarming with a most improvident, headlong population? The fol-

lowing powerful description occurs in the able and interesting pamphlet above cited.

“The Irish people can combine many fine qualities of heart and head with dissoluteness and depravity, with fraud and deceit, with an habitual disregard for truth, and frequent violation of the sacred sanction of an oath. Their religion is the observance of a few idle ceremonies, and terror of the priest. Their allegiance is terror of the law. But they have a law and a religion, which is neither of the priest, nor of the constitution: and which restrained in its exercise, is strongly enough seated in their hearts, to bid defiance to both. The leading doctrine of this code, like that of the Koran, is, that God is good. That it is right to enjoy the good things of this world, which he has made for the use of all, and which are the common property of mankind; that if prevented by arbitrary laws and regulations, it is right to evade them; that the soil is equally the patrimony of all, and belongs of right, if to any, to those only who till it; that property in the crops is acquired by those whose labour produces them; that the spontaneous product of the earth, which God makes to grow without cultivation, as timber, is free to all. That temptation, like every thing else, is of the appointment of God; that it is natural to man to yield to it, and therefore he will not punish him; that God is not severe, but must intend that they should enjoy what he puts in their way, and that eternal punishment would be disproportioned to *any* offence that could be committed in this life. Nothing but the strong arm of the state restrains the deluge of calamity, which these notions are calculated to let in upon society. That arm, indeed, stays the mountain-torrent, but sufficient of these wild waters find their way into the vale of society, to render all in this region unsafe and uncomfortable.”

The outrages of the Irish peasantry in the years 1821 and 1822, for the avowed purpose of abolishing tithe, tax, and rent, read a very forcible practical com-

mentary upon the foregoing description of their character and conduct.

It is quite vain to endeavour to infuse into these misguided people clearer notions of religious truth, of moral obligation, and of social order, by penal statutes, and by martial law. These have been sufficiently tried, both as to duration and to severity.

The only remedy to be found for the deep and deadly evils of Ireland is to be found in the general circulation of the Bible, and in the evangelical preaching of the protestant clergy.

In the reign of Elizabeth, the Irish protestant parishes were twenty-five hundred, and their clergy nearly three thousand, out of a population not amounting to two millions. In 1822, the protestant parishes were eleven hundred, and their clergy thirteen hundred, out of a population reaching seven millions. Then, the papists were scarcely two, now they are fully four to one protestant. Could these terrible results have happened, if the Irish national clergy had averaged a faithful discharge of their duties, as evangelical teachers and pastors?

In a pamphlet on "the state of the nation, at the commencement of the year 1822, considered under the four departments of finance, foreign relations, home department, colonies and board of trade," supposed to be written by one of the cabinet-ministers, Mr. Robinson, president of the board of trade, a sufficiently deplorable picture is drawn of the actual condition of Ireland. Some of the evils which afflict that country, namely, absenteeism, disproportionate rents, defective industry, uneducated poor, illicit distillation, superabundant population, want of employment, &c. are enumerated, and lamented; but are also declared to be, for the most part, beyond the power of the British government to remedy, or even to mitigate.

In Mr. Simpson's "Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings," there is, doubtless, too much minute intemperance of detail, and too much desultory declamation,

yet the book contains a vast body of alarming truth, and sound remark, upon the prevailing formalism and general carelessness of the clergy of the Anglican church.

Whatever we may think of the discretion, we cannot doubt the sincerity of a man, who, at an advanced period of life, resigned his Church preferment, and cast himself upon the bounty of Providence for a morsel of bread, because he could not conscientiously remain any longer in the establishment. No real Christian can forget his obligations to the author of "A Plea for the Deity of Jesus, and the Doctrine of the Trinity:" a book presenting the greatest weight of *cumulative* evidence in favour of the very foundation principles of our most holy faith, that has ever yet been brought to bear upon religious subjects.

I cannot refrain from citing a few passages from his "Plea for Religion," in order to show in what spirit the good old man wrote his valedictory to the Church.

"My judgment has not been biassed by interest, by connexion, by inclination, or by any human consideration whatever. I have thought much upon the subject; read on both sides of the question whatever has fallen in my way; conversed with various persons for the sake of information; suffered the matter to rest upon my mind for some years undetermined; have never made my fears, suspicion and dissatisfaction known to any man; and when I bring near to myself the thought of quitting one of the most commodious Churches in the kingdom, erected on purpose for my own ministrations; leaving interred by it many a precious deposit, who, I trust, will be my joy and crown in the great day of the Lord Jesus, besides a mother, a wife, two children, and a sister: and giving up various kind friends, whom I love as my own soul, together with a large body of people, that, if it were possible, would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them to me—what shall I say?

"All that is affectionate within me recoils. I am torn with conflicting passions; and am ready to say

with the Apostle,—I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my friends and brethren, whom I love in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

“ But various passages of Scripture urge me, on the most momentous considerations, to renounce a situation which I cannot any longer retain with peace of mind. I bewail it exceedingly; I have received no affront; conceived no disgust; formed no plans; made no connexions; consulted no friends; experience no weariness of the ministerial office; the ways of religion are still pleasant; I have been glad when duty called me to the house of God. His word hath been delightful; the pulpit has been awfully pleasing; the table of the Lord hath been the joy of my heart; and now, that Providence calleth me away, with some degree of reluctance, I say,—Lord, here I am;—do with me what seemeth Thee good. Let me stay where I am—I gladly stay. Send me where Thou wilt. I will endeavour to submit. Only go with me, and Thy pleasure shall be mine.

“ I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up, and steer
Right onward.”

In the biographical notice prefixed to Mr. Parsons's edition of the “ Plea for the Deity of Jesus,” is contained a very interesting account of Mr. Simpson's truly evangelical labours in the pulpit and in his parish; as an able and eloquent preacher, a learned and orthodox expounder of the Scriptures, and a faithful, zealous, efficient pastor. Seldom, in the history of the Christian church, has occurred an instance of a minister more truly devoted to his people; of a people more tenderly attached to their minister.

Perhaps one of the most hostile publications, on the part of the dissenters in England, vindicating their dissent from the national church, is Mr. Micaiah Towgood's book, entitled “ A Dissent from the Church of England fully justified, and proved to be the genuine and just consequence of the allegiance which is due to

Jesus Christ, the only lawgiver in the church." This book has run through several editions, and is a favourite with non-episcopalians; but the author's own Arianism materially dilutes the venom, and abates the force of his objections to the evangelical doctrines of the Anglican Church.

The first volume of Messrs. Bogue and Bennet's "History of Dissenters," contains some elaborate arguments for *general* dissent; or dissent from all churches, whether popish or protestant; whether episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregational. The concluding chapter in this volume offers reasons for *particular* dissent from the church of England; the church and dissent being personified as two old women; of whom one is made to talk like a fool, and the other like a bigot. This chapter is neither conceived nor executed in the best possible taste, as to sentiment or manner; and is calculated rather to retard, than to accelerate its professed object.

It is, however, due to these gentlemen to state, that whatever may be their opinions respecting church order, discipline and government, they are, invariably, staunch and able advocates for the evangelical doctrines of grace; the scriptural doctrines, promulgated by the protestant reformers.

In the house of lords, during a debate upon the propriety of slackening the legal cords, by which the dissenting sects are tied and bound in England, lord Chatham said, in his own strong way, and emphatic manner—"we have a popish liturgy, a Calvinistic creed, and an Arminian clergy." These expressions of the elder Pitt savour a little of oratorical license; and pass somewhat beyond the limits of plain matter of fact. For the present, let it suffice to observe, that the American-Anglo-Church is, in no way, connected with the state or government; labours under no lay-patronage; has no system of tithes; but stands on the same level of political toleration and right, with every other religious denomination throughout the Union; and, *as a church*, professes to be founded

and built upon the primitive ground, marked out and fenced in by the great English reformers; that is to say, upon the liturgy, articles and homilies of the Anglican church.

How far the American-Anglo-Church pulpit services generally coincide with the evangelical doctrines promulgated from the reading-desk, and contained and expounded in the articles and homilies, may be the subject of future consideration.

In my eighteenth year, I applied myself to the study of medicine; first in the country, then in London, then in Edinburgh, with the characteristic ardour of a sanguine temperament. In the Scottish metropolis, for its size, far the most intellectual place I ever knew, my mind was abundantly gratified. In the intervals of attendance on the medical lectures, and visiting the Infirmary, I listened to the prelections of professor Dalzell, the well known compiler of the "Collectanea," on Greek poetry; and began an acquaintance with metaphysics and political economy.

It would be worse than idle, to attempt even a sketch of the intelligent, vivacious, sceptical state of society in Edinburgh, after the full-length portrait given in "Peter's letters to his kinsfolk;" a work, so far as two years of residence in that distinguished school of instruction gave me an opportunity of judging, as accurate in its details as it is able and interesting, though occasionally quaint and obsolete, in its execution and manner.

Beyond all peradventure, my own religious impressions and opinions were considerably diminished and shaken, during my noviciate in the Scottish university, where I encountered, either avowed infidelity, or formal indifference, all around me, in either sex, and in every age; and perused the pages of Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, and other worthies of the French school of impiety and radicalism, together with the works of some of the English infidels, from lord Herbert, of Cherbury, who holds the bad emi-

nence of being the reputed father of deism in England, down to Thomas Paine, who is about the most illiterate and scurrilous reviler of Revelation, which the incubation of heated politics upon blasphemous insanity ever engendered.

The preaching of Mr. Alison, the author of a justly celebrated "Essay on Taste," and of some sweet little Sabbatical effusions, or dulcet discourses, by a singular misnomer called sermons, was not, at least so long as I heard him, peculiarly calculated either to dispel the darkness of infidelity, or to direct the vision of the heart to the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing underneath his wings.

The most efficient refutation of the infidel writers that I ever read, is Halyburton's "Inquiry into the necessity of Revelation;" a book at once able, learned and evangelical. The ingenuous youth, who is really seeking to find out the truth, will be well repaid by a diligent study of this little volume; after which he may consult the larger and more laborious tomes of Leland, on the Christian Revelation and against the deistical writers. To those, who think religion something more than a mere form of words, and are yearning after the power of godliness in their own hearts, the conversion of Halyburton, as related in his Memoirs, will afford an abundant harvest of instruction and delight.

In the course of ecclesiastical studies, established by the American house of bishops, in the convention of 1804, in pursuance of a resolution of the preceding general convention, it is said, "that it would be best for the student to read what the deists themselves have written."

The benefit of studying infidel productions is questionable; the peril certain. A correspondent in the Christian Observer, for April 1819, shows the direct tendency of studying sceptical writers to bewilder the understanding, and corrupt the heart. The concluding sentences of this admirable paper are replete with sound sense and true piety.

“ If an inquiry should be made for a safer and more certain course, (than the study of sceptical writers,) the Christian might well be exhorted to furnish himself with a rational conviction of his faith; and to that end he might be urged to study, with a simple, serious and impartial mind, some of those worthies of our cause, who have summed up, with unanswerable precision, the evidences which establish the divinity of our religion; not forgetting, however, that the Scripture is *its own* best evidence; and that, where devoutly studied with humble and earnest prayer to God, irresistible marks of divinity will appear in its hallowed pages. For *prayer* is the key, as well to a correct faith, as to a holy life.”

“ When once true religion is planted within us, prayer must fence it round, and protect it from the storm. From that period, the foundation once laid, the Christian will find his time more profitably occupied in learning to love and glorify his Saviour, than in labouring to protest, with historical accuracy, against the fallacy of errors, which are sometimes kept alive and in repute, like popular criminals, by the very intemperance with which they are attacked. The Bible, that common centre, round which all disputants affect to move, and to which they all refer, will teach us the insignificance of many minute discrepancies, which would be perfectly undeserving of notice, if they did not frequently cause an alienation of the heart, far wider than the petty difference of the mind; and as to the more important and vital principles of our faith, let us provide ourselves with the consoling reflection, dwelt upon by the learned and pious bishop of St. David's, (Dr. Burgess,) ‘ that having once convinced ourselves of the *truth* of Christianity, it is childish to discuss its *falsity*; having once satisfied ourselves as to the *positive*, it is downright absurdity to try the plausibility of the *negative*.’ ”

Indeed, there is no medium between receiving the Holy Scriptures as the entire Word of God, believing their declarations, obeying their precepts; and launch-

ing, at once, into the dark deep of infidelity, without rudder to steer, without compass to guide, without chart to direct, without beacon to warn, without star to light us on our course.

On my return to London from Edinburgh, I soon relinquished all thoughts of the practice of a profession, which is, of necessity, condemned to be perpetually raking into the very kennels of human infirmity. With the study of anatomy, physiology, surgery and medicine, both in England and Scotland, I was delighted; but I shrunk from the practice of either branch of the Esculapian calling.

Not that I would, for a moment, be understood to depreciate the practical part of a vocation, to the science and skill of whose professors the human race owes so much; to whom so many myriads are indebted for ease from agony, for rescue from the jaws of death, for the enjoyment and activity of prolonged and useful existence. It would not be easy, in the history of the world, to find a body of men, to whom science and learning generally, in addition to the particular labours of their own professional department, are more largely indebted than to the congregated hosts of the medical faculty. Lord Chatham used to say, that he gathered more instruction from Dr. Freind than from any other of his acquaintance.

As soon as I had determined not to enter upon the practice of physic, in any of its branches, I enrolled myself a member of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, and placed myself in the office of Mr. Chitty, the well known author of various law-books, on "Bills of Exchange;"—"Pleading;"—"Criminal Law," &c. and reputed to be, at least, among the first, if not the first, of the special pleaders in Westminster Hall. During two years of pupillage under this gentleman, I cultivated the melancholy science of special pleading.

But before I was called to the English bar, I suffered myself to be persuaded, partly by solitary reading, partly by my own crude cogitations, and partly

by the opinions and arguments of others, elder, and, as I then supposed, wiser and more experienced than myself, that Britain was too feudal in her institutions, too aristocratic in her social forms, for the welfare and happiness of her people; and that the United States of America, having cast off the slough of hereditary government, rank and property, opened an inexhaustible region for the developement of talents; the improvement of science, learning, and art, in all their various branches; and the advancement of political freedom, prosperity and beatitude.

Full of these preconceived notions, I came to the United States in the spring of 1806, in order to see with my own eyes, this new Atalantis, with all its felicitous results of a government, unique in the history of man; a democracy, purely elective and representative. The deliberate opinions of my riper years, in relation to the two countries, are before the world, in "The Resources of the British Empire," and "The Resources of America."

May I hope to escape the imputation of egotism, if I say a few words respecting the latter work? In these United States it was abused, as vilifying America, in order to exalt Britain. In England, the Reviewers stigmatized me as "an enthusiast for the glory of the United States," which, they said, "I founded on the ruin and depression of England."

Now, both these contradictory accusations cannot be correct; and is it not a fair inference, that the truth has been impartially spoken of both countries; and that the bigoted partisans of both, blinded by their own malevolence and prejudices, have, in this instance, as they usually do in other cases, mistaken an unnatural hatred of another country for a proof of pure and patriotic devotedness to their own; and merely exhibited a picture of their own moral deformity, alike alien from every expression of reason, truth, and justice? When Voltaire abused all mankind, as being villains, he, at least, proved himself to be no saint.

In Germany, where a professor at Weimar has translated the book into his own vernacular, it has escaped this cross fire of political partisanship. Never waste your breath for one moment, says Lavater, upon bigots, either in politics or in religion; for of all sinners they are the most incorrigible.

To those great doctors of philosophy, whether political or religious, who, invariably, content themselves with only a *one-sided* view of every subject presented to their deliberate consideration, I would recommend the following sentences in the preface to the first volume of the Christian Observer.

“ We conceived that a spirit of forbearance and Christian charity was perfectly consistent with the strictest orthodoxy, and we indulged a sanguine hope, that Christians, in general, would concur in this sentiment. Our expectations have been disappointed. Some of our correspondents have complained of our manifesting too great mildness and conciliation towards dissenters and separatists; interpreting a language without bitterness into blameable partiality; and misconstruing our reluctance to irritate, and to give needless offence, into want of zeal, or defect of courage. On the other side, some dissenters have charged us with being bigoted, persecuting Churchmen, and have not only treated us as adversaries of the dissenting interest, but as the enemies of Christianity itself.

“ Our religious principles have been no less the subject of contradictory animadversion. By rigid Calvinists we have been branded as Arminians; while, by many Arminians, we are classed with the disciples of Calvin. The cold and *formal* professor of Christianity stigmatizes our doctrines as cant and Methodism; while the heated enthusiast denies that spirituality, or evangelical truth, can be traced in our pages. It is, certainly, favourable to our cause, that the charges against us are so discordant and contradictory, as to require no distinct refutation; and we are encouraged by the very circumstance of our having offended the

angry and intolerant of these different parties, to hope, that we have succeeded in finding that due medium, which is equally remote from bigotry and the latitudinarian spirit."

To the United States I brought a mind bewildered amidst the mazes of metaphysical speculation, perplexed in the labyrinth of sceptical sophistry, and entangled in the too eager pursuit of a political millenium. But a few years of sojourning in this multitudinous democracy; a closer inspection of the realities of life; aided by solitary reflection, and the resumption of those scriptural studies, which had been too long intermitted during my medical and legal noviciates, reilluminated *veteris vestigia flammæ*; fanned the dying embers of a former flame; and caused the heart to return once more unto its rest.

When a few years of actual experience had compelled me to know, that human life, even under the favourable circumstances of youth, and health, and intellectual occupation, was full of disappointment, and vanity, and vexation, my soul was led, once again, to look upward, and say to Jehovah, "whom have I in heaven but Thee?" The alternations of hope and fear, the gleamings of ambition, and the clouds of doubt; the constant goadings of the natural mind, and the occasional yet terrible strivings of the spirit; the war of nature, and the conflicts of the heart, struggling between the instinctive incitements to a mere worldly career of secular pursuit, and the frequent warnings to lay hold upon the horns of the Altar, and obtain a personal interest in the all-sufficient sacrifice; all tended, under the good Providence of God, to demonstrate the entire nothingness of every earthly vocation and object, *in comparison* with an inquiry after the one thing needful; and to show forth the corruption, the folly, the weakness, the depravity of "that hideous sight, a naked human heart."

I had become acquainted, while a medical student in Edinburgh, with the Rev. Dr. Mason, who was then, in the winter of 1800—1801, on a visit from

New-York to Scotland, in search of some seceding ministers, wherewith to build up in greater strength, his own ecclesiastical body, the Associate Reformed Church in the United States. I was prodigiously struck with the force and vigour, and range of intellect exhibited in his conversation; and with the precipitation of heedless youth, thence drew a conclusion, *not* altogether verified by subsequent experience; namely, if this be a fair average specimen of American clergy, what must be her lawyers, her statesmen, her men of letters, her philosophers?

But the truth is, my premises were naught. No country ever did, or ever can, *average* such an amount of clerical, or of any other talent.

On my arrival in New-York, in July 1806, we renewed our acquaintance, which soon ripened into an intimacy truly fraternal, that lasted about six years; when it was broken up, and for ever scattered to the wild winds, by the systematic sycophancy and incessant intrigue of a very reverend brother.

During six years I sat under the ministry of Dr. Mason; and it is but justice to say of this profound divine, and powerful polemic, that while the better days of his intellectual strength continued to shine in all their unclouded splendour, I never heard a greater preacher; and yet I have listened to some of the most eminent men in the Anglican church, including the mighty Horsley himself. As an expositor of the Sacred Volume, I never heard Mason's equal; and his single sermons upon detached texts, were, when he was fully roused to the requisite pitch of mental exertion, surpassed by none that I ever heard or read.

Like all extempore preachers, his pulpit services varied in mental power and value, according to the degree of preparation, the state of health, the temperature of the spirits, the standard of excitement. But even in his most ordinary efforts, his unpremeditated effusions, the thewes and sinews, the bones and dimensions of a giant were visible;—*disjecti membra*

gigantis. He was completely master of his own theological system, that of full-blooded Calvinism, or Supralapsarianism; in the warfare of which, both offensive and defensive, he proved himself a most pointed and powerful writer.

The very few sermons which he has published, his Letters on frequent Communion, his Voice of Warning, his Oration on the death of Hamilton, some splendid fragments in the Christian's Magazine, and his noble Plea for Catholic Communion, all, in very deed, Scriptural, able, eloquent, are, I believe, the only scanty remains of a truly evangelical divine, who might, if his industry, perseverance and energy had been commensurate with his genius, talents and eloquence, have brightened the remotest recesses of Christendom with the blaze of his intellectual glory; might have been, what Chalmers is.

When the breach between Dr. Mason and myself had been rendered sufficiently deep and deadly to admit of no possible cure on this side of the grave, I returned into the bosom of that mother-church, which had nourished me, and my brethren, and my father, and my father's fathers for many preceding generations.

It is my wish, not to be understood as in any way designing to reflect upon the study or the practice of the law, by occasionally escaping from the toil and dust, and litigation of the forum, into the city of refuge. I have, elsewhere, undertaken to show, in opposition to very high authority, that the study of law, properly directed, invigorates, sharpens, expands and elevates the nobler faculties of the mind; and have borne testimony to the vast aggregate of talent, learning and efficiency, which at once support and adorn the American bar, throughout the various states in the Union; and have the honour of a personal acquaintance with some of the distinguished ornaments of the New-York bench and bar, who, in forensic power, in public estimation, in private worth, need not turn their backs to any jurists, ancient or

modern ; no, not even in the best days, the high and palmy state of England, Rome or Greece.

But the heart, when once effectually led to direct its gaze towards the eternal world, is like an animal that has tasted the blood of its prey, and can no longer be restrained. To a soul, thoroughly impressed with the importance of sacred truth, the wealth of Ormus and of Ind, the dominion of the Cesars, the fascinations of the entire world ; are all as nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison of the yearning of the heart to escape from the jaws of that second death, which are, for ever, yawning wide to receive the unrepentant, unregenerate, unconverted myriads of mankind.

CHAPTER I.

On the Anglican Church Establishment.

IN the year 1821, the Rev. S. C. Wilks published a work, entitled, "Correlative claims and duties; or, an Essay on the *necessity* of a church establishment in a Christian country, for the preservation of Christianity among the people of all ranks and denominations."

This work is written with great ability and candour; and a strain of genuine piety pervades all its pages. The remarks and exhortations, as to the means of exciting and maintaining among the members of the Anglican Church, a spirit of devotion, together with zeal for the honour, stability, and influence of the establishment, are beyond praise. To this book the Society for promoting Christian knowledge and church union in the diocese of St. David's, adjudged a premium of £50, in December 1820.

The main position taken and enforced by Mr. Wilks, is,—that where there is *no* church establishment, a nation necessarily tends to irreligion and heathenism.

In this opinion Mr. Wilks is not singular. Dr. Chalmers maintains a similar notion in his "Christian and civic economy of large towns;" and the same track is beaten by the British and Quarterly Reviewers; together with many other most respectable and able writers in England.

An inquiry, however brief and cursory, into the soundness of this position, may be deemed of some moment in these United States, where no church establishment can be instituted, without violating an express provision in the federal or national compact,

which binds together the whole union. For if this doctrine be sound, America has reason to apprehend the most portentous national evils, in consequence of not having linked the civil government and some one dominant Christian sect in the bonds of inseparable alliance.

If this position be correct, how did Christianity gain ground, and maintain itself, during the first three centuries of its rise and progress;—not only without, but in direct opposition to the power and force of the state? In the fourth century, Constantine, a mere politician, was some time balancing in his own mind, whether he should establish Paganism or Christianity as the *state* religion; and finally determined in favour of Christianity, because he thought it, on the whole, at that time, to be the stronger of the two rival candidates for imperial favour.

Many able and pious writers, besides Mr. Wilks, have entered the lists on both sides, in support and in reprobation of the *civil* establishment of Christianity. Its defenders hail the secular government as the stanch champion of the church; while its impugners, seeing the church, from that day in which Constantine wedded it to the state, amalgamated with the world, have represented this politico-clerical alliance as tending directly to stifle evangelical piety amidst the fire, and smoke, and darkness of intolerance, persecution, and formalism.

A brief outline of the leading historical facts of *national* churches, particularly the Greek, the Latin, the English, the Irish, and the Scottish, under every various form and mode of civil government, would, probably, supersede the necessity of any abstract discussion upon this point.

Dr. Burgess, bishop of St. David's, in his Letter to Mr. Wix, cites the following observations from Dr. Hickes's apologetical vindication of the church of England; in which the sum and substance seem to be, that the protestant rulers of England have intruded their secular arm into the ecclesiastical establish-

ment, somewhat more sparingly than popish sovereigns have been wont. But this is no conclusive proof, that either popish or protestant governments ought to cement themselves with, and direct the movements of any portion of the Christian Church.

Dr. Hickes says—"the gentlemen of the Roman communion are so apt to miscall our church a parliament church, and our religion a parliament religion, because our laws confirm and establish the doctrine and sanctions of the Church of England. But let them know, as bishop Jewel saith, that we hold not God's eternal truths by parliament, but by God; parliaments being uncertain, and often contrary, but God's truth is one, certain, and never changeth. However, we are thankful to God, and religious kings and parliaments, when they give legal establishments to the truth; as the imperial laws and edicts did to the decrees of the general councils; particularly, as Constantine, who sate in the Nicene council, confirmed the Nicene creed, and all other things ordained by that council, when he was but a catechumen, or learner of the Christian religion.

"He called himself *των εξω Επισκοπος*, the external bishop of the church; and after his death, the fathers surnamed him *Ισαποστολος*, *equal* to the apostles; and the Novels of Justinian, the Nomocanons, and Basiliks, the Capitularia of the old French, and the laws of the ancient Saxon kings, show, that religious princes have always thought it their duty to defend the faith and rights of the church, and by wholesome laws establish its peace and good order. King Canute, in parliament, made laws concerning the faith, about keeping of holydays, public prayers, learning the Lord's prayer, receiving the eucharist thrice a year, the form of baptism, fasting days, and other such matters of religion; and the popish religion owes its establishment in all popish countries to acts of sovereign princes and states; *without* which it would *not* long subsist.

“ Therefore, saith bishop Jewel to Harding, as you now call the truth of God we profess, a parliament religion, and a parliament Gospel; even so, with like sobriety and gravity of speech, ye might say, our fathers in old times, had a parliament Christ; and your fathers and brethren had of late, in time of queen Mary, a parliament faith, a parliament mass, and a parliament pope.

“ I have often wondered at the papists calling ours a parliament church, and a parliament religion, while *they* endeavour, every where, to proselyte kings and kingdoms, and have their religion established by law. With what reason or modesty then, can they thus insult our church and religion, or our kings and parliaments, since the Reformation, for meddling *too much* with church affairs and matters of religion; in which, if any of them have gone beyond just bounds, they have but *copied* some of our popish kings?

“ William the first, who established popery in England, ordained that none of his people should own any bishop of Rome for pope, but by *his* order; or in any manner obey him, before his letters were shown to the king; that the archbishop of Canterbury, primate of his kingdom, presiding in a general council of bishops, should neither enact nor prohibit aught but what *he* approved and ordained; and that none of *his* bishops should, without his command, cite into his court, or excommunicate, or otherwise censure, any of his barons or ministers, though for incest, or adultery, or any other capital sin. *Cuncta ergo, divina et humana ejus nutum expectabant*; all things, in religion and state, were at his beck; who violated the rights and liberties of the church, as of the people; making the bishops first do homage to him, and then giving them investiture into their sees by delivering the pastoral staff.

“ These and other such examples Henry the eighth followed in procuring some exorbitant acts of parliament, to the prejudice of the church; particularly those of his *supremacy*, the submission of the clergy,

the electing a bishop and archbishop, *nominated* in the letter missive; (a practice still continued under the statute of Henry, though condemned by that of the sixth Edward;) on account of which, and the exercise of the Regale, according to those acts, by the English princes since the Reformation, the papists upbraid us with the hardships *their* kings and bishops have brought upon us; despising, and teaching others to despise our church and religion, as a parliament church, and a parliament religion; because we submit to a yoke which we *cannot* shake off; a yoke, which galled their necks before us; a yoke of a popish king and parliament's making; and yet *not* heavier than what *their* church and sacerdotal colleges wear in several dominions; not to mention one, more heavy and grievous, which the supremacy of *the Apostle*, as they have long called the pope, hath put upon their necks."

"I desire the reader," adds bishop Burgess, "to take notice, that of twenty-nine or thirty *schisms* in the church of Rome, etc. etc., and if it were requisite to say more of the Roman schisms and differences, I could add another account of anticardinals and anti-councils, to this one of the antipopes."

The apology for the conduct of Henry the eighth, offered by bishop Burnet, somewhat resembles the reasoning of Dr. Hicke. In a letter to Mr. Ausont, dated Paris, 10th of August, 1685, printed towards the close of the third volume of his "History of the reformation of the church of England," the bishop says—"the reformation is not at all to be charged with king Henry's faults; for that unsteady favour and protection which they sometimes found from him, can no more blemish them, than the *vices* of those princes, the great promoters of Christianity, cast a blemish on the Christian religion. Let the crimes of Clovis, as related by Gregory of Tours, be compared with the worst things of Henry; and then let any man see if he find *so much* falsehood, mixed with so much cruelty, in so many repeated acts, for so

many years, in Henry, as in Clovis. Nor do we see any hints of Clovis's repentance, or restitution to the right heirs of those dominions, that he had seized on in so criminal a manner. And this was the first *Christian* king of the Franks."

That the Anglican church is, at this present hour, most closely welded to the state, appears from the open avowal of all parties in the house of commons, during a recent debate, that the church is part of the state, and the state part of the church.

On the 26th of January, 1821, in discussing the propriety of inserting in the liturgy the name of the late Queen of England, Mr. Wetherell, one of the opposition members, said, that prior to the Reformation the liturgy of England had been regulated by the pope; but when Henry the eighth separated from the Roman see, the church discipline and its regulations were placed under the superintendence of the *same* power as were the civil rights of England. In the reign of Edward the sixth the liturgy was established; and in successive reigns, the church became part of the state, as the state became part of the church. Such was the *political* effect of the Reformation. The reign of Mary produced a revulsion, which, however, was removed under her immediate successors. In the reign of James the first, the liturgy was established in nearly the same form as at present. Under the first Charles raged war, civil and religious. After the accession of Charles the second, the act of uniformity was sanctioned by the legislature.

Mr. Wetherell proceeded to argue, that plenary power existed in the king *and* parliament united, to regulate the discipline of the church.

Whereupon Dr. Dodson, a civilian, on the crown or ministerial side of the house, rose to show, that this power resided in the king *alone*. He said that the king had, by law, the *same* power, as to altering the liturgy, or common prayer, as the pope possessed and exercised previous to the Reformation. Henry the eighth made alterations in the liturgy, *of his own au-*

thority, without consulting either the lords or commons. And such was the admitted power, and the constant practice of Henry's successors; as appeared from the conduct of Edward and of Elizabeth, and of subsequent sovereigns.

No provision in the act of uniformity took away the power of the king to alter the common prayer. Indeed, *that* act was intended to confirm the power of the crown, with respect to the liturgy; and its very terms show, that the power of the crown, upon this subject, existed previous to its enactment. If the king does *not* possess the power of altering the common prayer, how came it to pass that so many new prayers have been occasionally framed and promulgated by order of the king in council, upon particular events?

Thus all parties agree, that the church of England has a supreme secular head, vested with full papal power over its external discipline and form of worship; either in the king himself alone, or in the three branches of the legislature, king, lords and commons united: neither of which serious Christians can be brought to believe an adequate substitute for the Redeemer himself; the Divine author, founder, preserver and governor of his own church.

To those who are enamoured of such an alliance between church and state, as constitutes a *national* establishment of one religious communion, to the exclusion of every other, are recommended the following facts, related by bishop Burnet, in his history of his own time; to show *what* sort of religion secular governments are apt to entertain, for the direction of their own conduct, and for the guidance of their people.

The bishop says, that Fabricius, the wisest divine he knew in Germany, told him some particulars which he had from Charles Lewis the elector palatine's own mouth; namely, that Frederic the second, who first reformed the palatinate, resolved to shake off popery, and set up Lutheranism in his country; but

one of his counsellors said that the Lutherans would always depend chiefly on the house of Saxony; whence it would not become him, the *first elector*, to be only the *second* in the party; it was more for his dignity to become a Calvinist, as he would be the head of that party, and have a great influence in Switzerland, and make the Huguenots of France and in the Netherlands depend on him.

This determined him to declare for the Helvetic confession; but upon the ruin of his family, the duke of Newburgh had an interview with the elector of Brandenburg, about their concerns in Juliers and Cleves, and persuaded the elector to turn Calvinist; for, since their family was fallen, nothing would more contribute to raise the other than the espousing that side, which would naturally come under his protection; but he added, that for himself, he had turned papist, because his little principality lay so near, both to Austria and Bavaria.

The elector palatine told this with pleasure, as it showed that other princes had no more sense of religion than he himself had.

As secular governments, when interwoven with a state church, have a direct tendency to create a secular priesthood, by their mode of distributing ecclesiastical dignities and benefices, it is *not* to be expected, that in times of peril, change and persecution, a national clergy should be ambitious of martyrdom, rather than relinquish or deny their professed principles and tenets.

Accordingly, it is a thing unheard of in all the history of Christendom, that any one, single, solitary, formal secular priest ever went to the stake, or to the gibbet, or to the dungeon, rather than renounce his religious opinions, or relinquish his avowed creed.

At the era of the Reformation, the great body of the English clergy changed backwards and forwards, shifted with every wind, and moved with every tide of courtly opinion, and royal decree. From their original, unmixed popery, they veered into semi-pro-

testantism, under the teaching of that powerful theologian, Henry the eighth. Under the sixth Edward, they professed to be whole protestants. The bloody Mary brought them back again to unmitigated popery. Under the auspices of the crafty, arbitrary, persecuting Elizabeth, they were, once more, transmuted into complete, ready-made protestants.

During the reign of the two first Stuarts, they were staunch nonresistance, passive obedience, *jure divino* high-churchmen. At the Restoration, they who, from all the rigorous and cumbersome ceremonial of Laud's episcopal formalism, had passed full easily, and with all convenient speed, into the various modes of church government and worship, adopted during the fluctuations of the commonwealth, returned, with equal ease, and equal speed, to the former usages and rites, rendered still more burdensome by additional impositions and severer penalties.

And doubtless, if James the second had not been cashiered by some of the leading English families, the great mass of the national clergy would have gone over to popery with him; yielding, however, another goodly crop of Bartholomew-nonconformists, from the better portion of them.

Pray *what* would be the result, as to the conduct of the clerical aggregate, in the event of a change in the English state religion, now, in the nineteenth century? How large a proportion of the national clergy would become proselytes to the new scheme of church government, whether popish, or presbyterian, or congregational?

If it be sound doctrine that a church establishment is necessary to prevent a Christian nation from degenerating into heathenism, how is it, that under the Hibernian church establishment, Ireland has, ever since the time of Elizabeth, to the present hour, a period of nearly three hundred years, been positively increasing in popery, paganism, persecution, ignorance and crime; so as now to become an object of apprehension and terror, instead of being, what her

natural situation and capacity point her out to be, the efficient right arm of the British empire?

If there be a spot,—says Mr. Middleton, in his *Decades* for 1770-1780—in the wide range of Methodistic exertion, in which the pious but fastidious churchman would less regret its irregularity, and more unhesitatingly rejoice in its success, it is Ireland. From the peculiar circumstances of its ecclesiastical history, and the actual condition of its inhabitants, the benevolent mind cannot but feel satisfaction at the endeavours of the Wesleyans to carry religion into the cabins of its benighted peasantry.

Four-fifths of the population were lying in the darkness of pagan ignorance, or the twilight of popish superstition; and the (*national*) clergy in general, partly from motives of delicacy to the Romish parish priests, and partly from the want of zeal to encounter local difficulties in their instruction and conversion, seemed to abandon them to their fate.

The first preachers of Christianity in Ireland—observes Dr. Beaufort—established a great number of bishoprics, which gradually coalesced into the thirty-two dioceses, that, for several centuries, constituted the ecclesiastical division of the kingdom. But when the country became impoverished and depopulated by the perpetual feuds and frequent civil wars, with which it was desolated for ages, it was found necessary, at different periods, to unite some of the poorest of these sees, in order that the bishops might have a competence to support the dignity and hospitality incumbent on their stations; and hence it comes, that there are only twenty-two prelates in the church of Ireland, twenty sees being united under ten bishops. These causes having had the same operation with respect to parishes, the two thousand four hundred and thirty-eight parishes do not form quite twelve hundred benefices, many having been consolidated by the privy council, from time to time, under the authority of an act of parliament; and many

others, though but episcopally united, having been considered as only one living, time out of mind.

The consequence was, that many parts of this fine and interesting country exhibited the appearance of wide and extensive parishes, *nominally* under a protestant incumbent, but actually divided into districts under Romish clergymen; while the great body of the natives, retaining the religion of their ancestors, were forced to contribute to the maintenance of a reformed hierarchy; their resentments, meanwhile, embittered by the tyrannical conduct of the middle-men, or agents, employed by the absentee land proprietors.

The existing state, moral and physical, of Ireland, is, most assuredly, *no* proof of the Christianizing tendencies of the Anglican and Hibernian church establishments.

If it be a correct position, that a church establishment is necessary to preserve a Christian country from the darkness of heathen ignorance, how happens it that there has been generally, and is now, a larger proportional aggregate of evangelical piety *out of*, than *in* the church of England?

To say nothing, for the present, of the condition of the state religion, under the Tudors and Stuarts, its formalism and deadness, during the reigns of William, of Anne, and of the two first sovereigns of the Brunswick dynasty, are sufficiently notorious to all who are acquainted with the ecclesiastical history of that period. Nay, even the revivals which took place in the time of George the third, have *not* leavened a very large proportion of the national clergy; as appears from Mr. Middleton's "Ecclesiastical Memoir of the four first decades of the reign of George the third."

Mr. Middleton gives a general description of the English hierarchy and clergy, at the commencement of that period, in the year 1760. He ranks the character of the episcopal bench as *next* in importance to

that of the sovereign. If the king be legal head of the national church, and supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, the bishops are considered as its spiritual fathers, its actual guardians, its practical governors.

He thinks that the circle of human dignities cannot produce a more weighty or honourable charge than that of an Anglican prelate. Lifting his mitred head in parliaments, and taking his place among the hereditary legislators of the realm, and counsellors of the sovereign, his exalted station entitles him to watch over the interest, advocate the doctrine, preserve the discipline, regulate the worship, and defend the revenue of the fairest and discreetest of the daughters of the Reformation; to enter his protest with gravity and firmness against the highest patrician, who shall attempt to corrupt her principles, or destroy her privileges; to speak of the Divine testimonies before kings, and not to be ashamed, knowing his immense responsibility to that Providence, who hath constituted him a chief servant in the household of faith; while his diocesan, judicial and academical authority, or connexion, enables him in a variety of ways to consult the spiritual good of his contemporaries, and affords many facilities for advancing the cause of godliness, by favouring the faithful reporters of the message of heaven, or discountenancing the secular and heterodox among the subordinate pastors.

But the Anglican bishops of that day are described as *not* being conspicuous for evangelical purity of sentiment, or attachment to the distinguishing tenets of the Reformation, as expressed in the articles of the religious communities over which they presided. They drank too much into the spirit of the fashionable theology. Occasionally, the sound sense and pious convictions of certain individuals of their number, led them to remonstrate with their clergy on the necessity of adopting a more Scriptural strain of preaching than generally prevailed.

Occasionally, too, they set the example, in their own discourses, of a departure from the dry method of ethical exhortation, and fortified the lesson of obedience by the powerful sanction of Revelation, or enlightened their audience by an exhibition of the holy verities of the Gospel. But the doctrine of justification by faith alone, was, in general, inadequately and imperfectly stated; the corruption of human nature was spoken of in qualified terms; and salvation was too often represented as the possible attainment of mortal exertion, and the legal reward of a religious and virtuous conduct.

They, either wilfully or ignorantly, stigmatized all zeal for the honour of the Saviour, and all compassion for perishing sinners, which led the preacher to proclaim, with appropriate energy, and in familiar terms, the fullness and freeness of the everlasting Gospel, as Methodism, and a design to court popularity, and ultimately to effect an overthrow of the national church.

By most of the dignitaries of that day, and their ordinary associates, fervour was denominated cant; watchfulness, hypocrisy; and abstraction from worldly society, unnecessary strictness. Connected with the first families in the empire, by birth, alliance, or circumstance, their criticisms on the *belles lettres*, too often usurped the place of Scriptural information; what was elegant in conversation was more esteemed than what was edifying; and among the higher orders of the clergy, the unction of humility, which flowed from the silvered temples of Beveridge, down to the skirts of his garment, and the glow of holy zeal which animated the bosoms of Reynolds and Hopkins, seemed to be exchanged for courtly aspirations after preferment and translation, or distinction in the laxer schools of modern divinity.

The national clergy of that period are divided into the secular, the latitudinarian, the orthodox, and the evangelical.

The secular are represented as a numerous class.

Strangers to the life and power of godliness, imperfectly acquainted with the religious truths, of which they were appointed heralds, and better versed in the maxims of pagan ethics than the principles of Christian morality, they afforded a subject of animadversion to dissenters; grieved the souls of the righteous in their own communion; and bartered the lasting esteem of the wise and good for the precarious friendship of the idle and the dissolute.

If residing in populous towns, they thought it not derogatory to their sacred profession to take a prominent part in the amusements of the worldly and the frivolous. The theatre, the tavern, the bowling-green, the ball-room, the concert, and the horserace, were the accustomed haunts of these degenerate sons of Levi. Hour after hour was consumed at the card-table. They sought to ingratiate themselves with the polite and wealthy, by suppleness of manner, smartness of repartee, readiness of quotation, or art of compliment; and as the clerical dress, so commonly worn in the preceding century, was now altogether superseded by a habit more and more assimilated to the prevailing fashion, little was left, even in appearance, to distinguish the ambassador of the Lord of hosts.

In country villages, they associated with the gentry, in their field-sports, hunting-parties, or convivial feasts; where they witnessed vain conversations, impious ejaculations, and intoxicated spirits. The lord of the manor attended his parish church on Sunday, from a sort of mixed feeling of at once propitiating the favour of the Deity, and setting an example to his tenants of reverence for instituted ordinances. In this little Gothic temple, he listened to the clerk that prophesied smooth things; or, at intervals, dozed under the tame admonition; and when brought to the bed of death, he looked to this same clerk, with whom he had so often sate down to eat and drink, and risen up to play, to administer to him the emblems of a

Saviour's body and blood, as a passport to the joys of eternity.

Those who have learned from the study of their Bible, and from acquaintance with the history of the world, that human communities and nations, invariably, flourish or fade in proportion to the prevalence or absence of pure, vital religion, in the hearts and actions of their people,—will readily acknowledge, that when so large a portion of the ordained clerical instructors of the state were thus unfaithful to their charge, and unqualified for their office; and when, in consequence, so much irreligion and gross profligacy pervaded all orders of men, it was a righteous retribution of a righteous God to smite the nation with his rod; to purify the polluted atmosphere by his thunders; and to rouse the country to a sense of religious and moral duty, by a series of alarming visitations.

The civil commotions of this period, the animosity and avowed want of principle in political parties, the embarrassed condition of the government, in its hostilities with European powers, and the impending dismemberment of its American empire, are the evident judgments of Jehovah on a land that had dishonoured his name, and his truth, through the means of that very national church establishment which is *assumed* to be necessary, as the sole preservative of men from general irreligion and heathenism.

The conduct of many secular clergymen, who engaged with violence and pertinacity in party politics, contributed, also, to lower the whole order of the state priesthood in the estimation of the public. Contests among the presbyters themselves were, indeed, diminished by the disuse of the houses of convocation; but the seeds of other evils were sown by the liberty given to the national clergy of voting for members of parliament, as an equivalent for relinquishing the privilege of self-taxation.

This tended to divide the clerical body on great political questions, and to induce individuals, on either

side, to conciliate the favour of patrons of benefices, by exertions in their behalf. Political elections became regular stepping-stones to church preferment. Intemperate language sounded from the pulpit; and the zeal, with which opposite party opinions were maintained in public meetings or private parties, ill became those whose province it was to endeavour to compose the jarring elements, and show mankind the superior duty and interest of striving for a heavenly inheritance, and giving diligence to make their spiritual calling and election sure. Tracts, poems, essays, were issued from the press by reverend authors, who breathed the spirit, and exhibited the style of political partisans.

Nearly allied to the secular class of the established clergy, was that of the latitudinarians; many of whom, however, were decorous in their habits and studious men. They were chiefly distinguished by the grounds on which they subscribed to the articles, and used the formularies of the Anglican Church.

They considered as indifferent many points of faith and doctrine, which the orthodox regarded as essential; and deemed it a discharge of their obligations, and a maintenance of their integrity, provided they did not openly and avowedly attack the received system in their professional capacity; but contented themselves with occasional criticism and speculative discussion. They merged the character of divines in that of philosophers; and putting *their own* sense on certain theological terms and religious declarations, they were led, by the very nature of their system, to vague interpretation and disingenuous conclusion; while they were attached to the ecclesiastical establishment by expediency, rather than conviction.

This division of the state clergy were not contented with professing themselves mere Arminians, and objecting to that portion of the articles commonly called Calvinistic; but lapsed, in various degrees and pro-

portions, into the Arian, Socinian and Pelagian heresies and errors.

Some adopted the notions of Dr. Samuel Clarke, in respect to the doctrine of the Trinity, as well as the mysterious subjects of liberty and necessity. Others departed from the Scriptural simplicity with which the Anglican Church receives the doctrine of the fall of man in her articles and homilies; and either considered the Mosaic account of that awful event as an oriental allegory; or, as only implying a partial declension in the human mind, and by no means a total departure from original righteousness.

In perfect accordance with their inadequate views of human apostacy, the latitudinarians rejected the truly protestant tenet of justification by faith alone; Luther's *Articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*; calling the doctrine of imputed righteousness absurd and unintelligible; while they ridiculed the notion of experimental evidence in religion; a melancholy, but conclusive proof, that they themselves had never been the subjects of religious feelings and affections.

On the doctrine of future punishment, both as to its nature and duration, this class of state clergy entertained loose opinions. From the days of Origen, false teachers had endeavoured to lull to sleep the consciences of sinners, by impugning the Scriptural denunciations of final and irreversible punishment to the ungodly and impenitent. Never, says dean Young, did sin sleep on so soft a pillow, as is made up of this hypothesis. A negation of happiness, or, at most, a qualified punishment for a limited term, was a sufficient reckoning, in the opinion of latitudinarian theologues, for the most abandoned rebel against God and his Christ.

The orthodox, among the established clergy, were fewer in number than either the seculars or the latitudinarians. They were eminently serviceable to the church, and to the cause of religion, by their bold and steady assertion of some essential doctrines of

the Gospel. And though some of them revived the high tory intolerance of a former age; and in their zeal for church government, consigned all non-episcopalians to the *uncovenanted* mercies of God, and thus outraged the feelings, and shocked the understandings of many of the most pious and estimable of their contemporaries; yet were they respectable for their general consistency, as members of the establishment.

Their sermons were deficient in the energetic spirituality, and affectionate simplicity which marked the addresses of their evangelical brethren; nor did they appeal so forcibly, on the truths of religion, to the consciences of their hearers. Yet were their ministrations blessed to the conversion and edification of many; while they exhorted sinners to flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel, and admonished them to seek that influence from above, which would guide them into all truth.

Against the Arian they upheld the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity; against the Socinian, the need of an atonement; against the Pelagian, the depravity of our common nature. But in stating the plan of salvation, they were *not* always sufficiently clear in assigning to repentance and faith their due place in the Christian covenant; nor in representing obedience as the fruit, or evidence of justifying faith. Their phraseology sometimes led the half-convinced, self-justiciary into a notion, that a threefold merit attached to his person on repenting, believing, and obeying; and that when salvation was affirmed to be of grace, it rather referred to its origination on the part of God, than its reception on the part of men. Bred in the modern school of Sherlock and Wilson, they drew with less discrimination the characters of real and nominal Christians, than those divines who studied the writings of Hall and Leighton; and forming their style on that of Tillotson, they branded a plainer and a more Scriptural diction as a remnant of puritanism.

The evangelical clergy of the church of England, so called in derision and scorn, by their formal brethren, were, at this period, a very small band. Thinly scattered up and down the kingdom, they were opposed to the seculars by their devotedness to the duties of their sacred calling; to the latitudinarians, by their jealous adherence to the letter and spirit of Revelation; and to the orthodox, by their faithfulness in proclaiming the doctrines of grace, and declaring the whole counsel of God; while they equalled them in theological correctness and moral consistency.

In this class there were subdivisions; some preferring the Calvinistic, others the Arminian scheme. They not only differed in their pulpit statements, but opposed each other from the press; and were insensibly led into the thorny labyrinth of party polemics, instead of making common cause against the common enemy, and fighting in union under the banner of the Cross, against formalism, and irreligion, and infidelity. They differed, also, in phraseology; some endeavouring to use plain, Scriptural language, without descending into provincial barbarisms, or colloquial vulgarity; others thinking, that to abstain from a rude and homely diction, was an evasion of the offence of the Cross.

Some, lamenting the prevalence of religious darkness in England, and deeply sensible of the dangerous state of the unconverted millions of their countrymen, overleaped the pale of their own parishes, and became itinerant preachers; exhorting their fellow-sinners to repentance, faith and obedience, in unconsecrated places, in barns and in conventicles, and in the open air.

But the greater number of the evangelicals deemed such proceedings inconsistent with the regular ministrations of a national priesthood; incompatible with their vow of canonical obedience; and calculated to prejudice their civil and ecclesiastical superiors against the most serious and devoted of the state

clergy. Many of these divines, in their preaching, did not confine themselves to the merely reading a written or printed sermon; but addressed their congregations from short notes, or extempore, according to the custom of the best English clergy, under the Tudors and the Stuarts. Some of them, also, revived the usage of singing hymns and spiritual songs, abounding in evangelical sentiment, in addition to the common versions of the psalms of David.

Does *such* a state of religion, as that just described, among the national clergy of England, *two hundred* years after the settling of the state church by Elizabeth, prove the position, that a church establishment is necessary to keep alive the flame of pure religion in a Christian country, and to preserve it from gravitating into general heathenism?

The *revivals* of religion, which have taken place in England, during the last eighty years, are *not* owing to the establishment. For the national church establishment, *as such*, has always endeavoured, and does now labour, to the full extent of its power, to crush all revivals of religion. The treatment which Whitfield and Wesley received from the state clergy, and their *compulsory* separation from the national church, is well known. And it is equally notorious, that the civil government of England most scrupulously abstains, *to this hour*, from promoting evangelical ministers to the high places of the national church. A *certain recent* appointment to the episcopate does not invalidate this statement; for that appointment was carried, altogether, by *family* influence, against the general sense of the cabinet; and in direct opposition to a formidable petition from the assembled hierarchy, that such a promotion might *not* be made.

The bishops and high clergy generally, strive to extinguish evangelism in the state church, by discouraging the ordination of pious youth, by suspending curates, by refusing their countersignatures to presentees, and by discountenancing and harassing actual incumbents, if guilty of preaching the Gospel faith-

fully and zealously. Indeed, *now*, the British government and its hierarchy unite in their efforts to destroy the evangelicals, more cordially, and more strenuously than has been done before, since the reign of the most execrable of the Stuarts.

The following observations on the importance and influence of *dissenters* in England, are gathered from a modern popular and able work. They are to be received with some degree of caution and allowance, because they are written by an English independent or congregational minister; who, as such, in common with the most upright and conscientious men, cannot divest himself of a bias in favour of the opinions and habits in which he has been trained, or which he has deliberately adopted. Nevertheless, they contain so much truth and good sense, as to deserve the serious consideration of every wellwisher to the cause of pure, evangelical Christianity.

It cannot, surely, be contended that the dissenters in England owe their piety to the precept and example of the state church; because that church has, invariably, proscribed and persecuted the dissenters, with all the rigour allowed by the various laws of intolerance, passed in different ages by the civil government; and, sometimes, with a cruelty beyond the full legal allowance of the most flagitious penal statutes.

That the principles of English dissent have operated powerfully in the world, will not be doubted by any one, who reflects on their influence in creating a new empire on the American continent; which has already contributed to the most mighty revolution in the state of Europe, and promises to become itself one of the most extensive and powerful nations of the globe; and to impart its impulses to the other quarters of the earth, by fostering a republican spirit; by diffusing the stream of general education; by strengthening the force of public opinion; and by exerting incessantly the paramount power and influence of the press.

Our present object, however, is to show the influence of the English dissenting communions upon true religion; upon sacred literature; upon public morals; upon civil and religious liberty; and upon the national prosperity of Britain.

The dissenters have most powerfully promoted the interests of true godliness; in forwarding which, some hundreds of evangelical ministers among the state clergy are now spending their laborious lives. From the restoration of the second Charles to the rise of Methodism, in the reign of George the second, dissenters stood *alone* in defence of the best of causes. They alone maintained the depravity of human nature, which no baptismal waters could wash away; they preached the great tenets of the Reformation, the doctrines of justification by faith alone, and of regeneration by the Holy Spirit; when they were ridiculed by the established clergy, in defiance of their own articles and homilies, as the dogmas of fanaticism; and they, singly, dared to protest against the fashionable vices of the nation, the profligacy of a corrupt or a careless court, at the hazard of being treated as outlaws from society, and traitors to the state.

Of them may it be said—except the Lord of Hosts had left us that remnant, our country had been as Sodom and Gomorrah. The apostacy of the English nation from the sentiments and spirit of the Gospel, had been nearly total, but for the dissenters; by their means, almost exclusively, a vital spark of pure evangelism was preserved, and the nation is now warmed into light and life by the spreading of the heavenly flame. To have been, for nearly a century, the witnesses for God in the land, although prophesying in sackcloth, was a high honour, and a distinguished blessing.

A thousand dissenting churches were, during all that time, receiving into their communion, those who were *converted* by the preaching of the Gospel among them; while *no* such effects were looked for by the

established clergy; nay, were derided by them, as the delirious dreamings of puritanical madness and folly. To form an adequate estimate of all the benefits, direct and indirect, produced in the cities, towns and villages of England, from such a practical testimony borne to the most important of all truths, is beyond the power of human calculation. But he who exults in the prosperity which *now* attends the Gospel of Christ in various communions, must look back with veneration to the people, who once professed, *alone*, what now forms the general glory of the land.

Though the numbers of the dissenters are more than doubled, and their activity much increased, it is difficult to compute their influence, at present, upon true religion; because they share it in common with new sects, and a new party in the establishment. But as their ministers more than double the evangelical clergy in the state church, it is manifest, that so many labourers, added to those who preach the Gospel in the establishment, must produce the happiest effects in diffusing religion throughout the nation.

Besides, many of the dissenting churches are as important now as ever they were; being located where all around them is *still*, notwithstanding the Christianizing tendencies of a state church, as dark in irreligion and heathenism as before the rise of Methodism in England, or the subsequent revival of religion within the bosom of the establishment. The living fire, so long secretly cherished by the dissenters, has communicated its heat to many who avoid their name. Those clergymen who were the fathers of the Methodists, might never have been heard of beyond the boundaries of a single parish, had they not learned from the dissenters to consider the whole kingdom as their parochial cure.

The *social* religion, cherished by dissenters as the life of the Christian church, has not only produced the happiest effects among themselves, but has also been imparted to the friends of evangelical truth in the establishment. Many, who remain under epis-

copal government, imitate the dissenters in the choice of their own ministers. Thus several parishes in London have obtained evangelical afternoon lecturers; and some livings have been procured for those who preach the creed to which they have sworn.

The zealous friends to the doctrines of the articles and homilies, also, observing that the dissenting seminaries for the ministry are supported by voluntary contributions, have established a similar fund to support serious young men, while preparing at the universities for the ministry of the Anglican Church. The Missionary Society, formed among various classes of dissenters, has given rise to another, confined to churchmen; and new proofs are continually exhibited of the salutary effects of dissent on the cause of true religion, even beyond the immediate circle of dissenting churches.

To the liberal spirit cherished by dissenters, England, also, owes much of its eminence in various branches of literature and science. They have always exercised considerable influence over the press; and from the time that Elizabeth compelled the puritans to establish private circulating presses, to the last of the Stuarts, who subjected the nonconformists to the tyranny of a licenser, they struggled to avail themselves of this mode of appealing to the tribunal of the public.

It is, however, to their immortal honour, that their laurels are principally gathered from Mount Zion; and their literary labours, like those of the Hebrew sages, consecrated to the service of the temple of God. Ainsworth, the rabbi of the Independents, gave the first specimen of just expositions of Scripture; and struck out the path, in which Lowth and Horsley have since made such honourable advances. Among popular commentaries on the whole of the Sacred Volume, none can vie with that of Matthew Henry. The labours of Mr. Scott, an evangelical clergyman in the establishment, deserve high praise,

particularly for the valuable collection of marginal references; by which he has far surpassed Brown, on whose shoulders, however, he had the advantage of standing.

No work on a single book of Scripture is equal to Dr. Owen's "Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews;" valuable on many accounts, but chiefly for diligent research into the mind of the Spirit, expressed in the Scriptures. Doddridge and Guyse are celebrated commentators on the New Testament; and if Scottish presbyterians be accounted dissenters, Brown, Macknight and Campbell, deserve honourable mention, as valuable writers on the Christian Scriptures. Dr Taylor's Hebrew Concordance has afforded great assistance in the study of the Old Testament; and Dr. Ashworth's Hebrew Grammar is still in general use.

Nearly all the bodies of divinity in the English language, are the productions of dissenters. Baxter, Lawson, Ridgley, Gill and Watson, have each given systems of theology, valuable, as presenting a comprehensive view of the whole subject; however objectionable as distorting particular parts. In the philosophy of theology, president Edwards, and Dr. Williams, his editor and commentator, are unrivalled. The establishment might have borne the palm in defending the *outworks* of Christianity, but for Lardner's "Credibility of the Gospel," which is as valuable for its aid to other advocates of the Christian Revelation, as for its own intrinsic merits.

Of detached theological publications, the far greater part have been written by dissenters, if we include the ponderous folios of Owen, Howe, Baxter, Flavel, Bates, and many others of nearly equal worth. That the most popular published sermons should be preached by dissenters, might have been expected; since *preaching* is deemed of more importance by them than it is in the establishment, where the liturgy is generally considered as more than a sufficient substitute.

The Rev. Thomas Scott, who was regularly baptized, and as regularly bred up a formalist, and *as such* took orders in the church of England, but was afterwards awakened, and being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, was converted unto God, says, in his interesting, instructive and awful narrative, "The Force of Truth,"—some time in November 1777, I was, by a then unknown friend, furnished with a considerable number of books, written, in general, by the *old divines*, both of the church of England and of the dissenters.

To my no small surprize, I found those doctrines, *now* deemed novel inventions, and called methodistical, discoursed of in these books as known and allowed truths; and that the system, which, despising to be taught of men, and unacquainted with such authors, I had, for near three years together, been hammering out for myself, with no small labour and anxiety, was ready made to my hands, in every book I opened. I do not wonder that the members of the church of England are generally prejudiced against the writings of dissenters, for I have been so myself to an excessive degree.

We imbibe this prejudice with the first rudiments of instruction, and are taught by our whole education, to consider it as meritorious; though, no doubt, it is a prejudice, of which every sincere inquirer after truth ought to be afraid, and every pretended inquirer ashamed; for how can we determine on which side the truth lies, if we will not examine both sides? Indeed, it is well known to all those who are acquainted with the church histories of those times, that, till the reign of James the first, there were no controversies between the established church and the puritans, concerning *doctrines*; both parties being, in all matters of importance, of the same sentiments; they only contended about discipline and ceremonies, till the introduction of Arminianism gave occasion to the Calvinists being denominated doctrinal puritans.

To this period, all our church writers were Calvinistical in doctrine; and even after that time, many allowed friends to the church of England opposed those innovations, and agreed in doctrine with every thing above stated. Let it suffice, out of many, to recommend the works of Bishop Hall, especially, his "Contemplations on the Life of Jesus;" a book not easily to be prized too highly; and Dr. Reynolds's works. To these no true friend of the church of England can reasonably object; and, in general, I believe and teach nothing but what they plainly taught before me.

In these United States, we have no dissenters, because we have no national church establishment linked with the civil government; the federal constitution having put all religious sects upon an equal political footing. But our modern fashionable theologians, in the American-Anglo-Church, entertain, to the full, as great a horror of Calvinism, as do any of their brethren in the Anglican establishment. Nay, some of the very slenderest, most unfledged, and callow divines, who might answer to Pope's definition of Entick, the dictionary-maker, as one who may possibly understand the meaning of a single word, but, certainly, not the meaning of two words put together,—affect, in defiance of bishop Horsley's emphatic caution, to prattle about "the absurdity, the weakness, the inconclusive reasoning, the narrow capacity," and so forth, of Calvin, Knox, Owen, and many other of the brightest luminaries that have ever blazed as beacon-fires, in the Christian hemisphere.

It is no breach of charity to say, that the minuter formalists, who instruct their auditors on the Sabbath, with a meagre compound of diluted ritual and attenuated morality, could *not*, possibly, by the severest stretch of their natural and acquired understanding, be made to comprehend one solitary link in the chain of argument, employed to bind together a single proposition in the entire system of theology embraced by those great men, against whom they so

incessantly and so flippantly babble. But "there is no slander in an *allowed* fool, though he doth nothing but rail."

"Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day."

While the devout Christian regards the prayers of the faithful as an inestimable blessing to their country, the mere politician values religion only for the sake of the superior *morals* which it inculcates and inspires. Industry, essential to the cultivation of the soil, and to the progress of arts, manufactures and commerce, is seldom carried to its utmost limit, except under the influence of religious principle. The temperance and frugality which husband the produce of labour, and leave to the individual a surplus, to supply the demands of the state, must proceed from the prevalence of mind over the senses; and the good order, which frees a government from the fear of open insurrection, or of secret crime, is most effectually secured by the fear of that Supreme Ruler, who can equally detect covert villany, and punish prosperous violence.

That dissenters are *not*, as a body, chargeable with open vice, is virtually acknowledged by their enemies, who accuse them of hypocrisy, which conceals odious tempers under a decent exterior. But, as the national church *avowedly* embraces the whole population of the country, it *must* have the character which belongs to the nation; so that declamations against the vices of the land, fall, ultimately, upon the *church establishment*, which claims the aggregate body of Englishmen as *her* children.

When excommunication was practised, its thunders fell, *not* on notorious sinners against morality, but on rebels against ecclesiastical authority;—and now that its thunders are silent, all, who are not avowed dissenters, are deemed members of the state church; from the splendid profligates, among the aristocracy, whose divorce bills continually occupy

the attention of parliament, down to the convicted felons recorded in the Newgate Calendar. While this scandal necessarily cleaves to *national* churches, it prevents them from practically promoting the cause of morals, whether public or private, by excluding from their communion those, who grossly violate the pure code of ethics, which they may publish from their pulpits.

But the dissenting churches can follow up the moral doctrine, which all parties profess to inculcate, by the strictest discipline. As excommunication, among them, involves no injury to civil rights, it is practised, whenever the vices of a member disgrace the body. Knowing themselves to be objects of notice and of censure, dissenters are unwilling to be identified with the loose and immoral; and within the limits of a single congregation, the character of an individual cannot be long unknown. The evangelical dissenting churches, whether presbyterian, or independent, or methodist, feel themselves bound by the authority of Scripture, to put away from them a wicked person; and even the less honourable motive of zeal for the party, would induce any sect to watch over its moral reputation, as essential to the accession of proselytes, and the preservation of its own members; since the grossly profligate will cease from all profession, or sink into the easier and more fashionable religion of the state church.

While, therefore, some are deterred from vice by fear of exclusion from a society composed of their most intimate acquaintances, friends or relations; those who are lost to fear or shame, usually abandon the dissent, and transfer their character and influence to the establishment. If, on these accounts, the interest of morality is more powerfully promoted by dissenters than by churchmen, *therefore* is so much odium attached to dissent. For while the religious condemn and abhor every species of vice, the vicious endeavour to retaliate, by pouring ridicule and calumny upon the stricter profession of religion.

Hence the national rage against the nonconformists, at the restoration of the second Charles. Had they joined the revels of the profligate monarch and his infamous court, their dissent from the state religion, which *he*, as defender of the faith and supreme head of the church, established, would have been a venial crime; for while he was reconciled to the church of Rome, he was quite cordial with the church of England. But they wounded his pride, and stung his conscience, by moral conduct too far elevated above his own; and therefore aided, nay urged onward by his established hierarchy, he sought to quench every ray of evangelical light, and truth, and purity, in the tears and blood of the persecuted disciples of Christ.

For the *same* reason, dissenters are unpopular now; especially in villages and small towns, where men are better acquainted with the characters of each other than in great cities. The supporters of the village alehouse or theatre, are the greatest enemies to those who regularly attend the meeting-house; and who are often reminded by rude and insolent treatment, as they pass, in their way to the sanctuary, the *Sunday* tipplers, or combatants in rustic games, how hateful their superior strictness in observing the Lord's day is to those, who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

Good example, however, has a beneficial influence even when most hated. The societies for reformation, which sprang up immediately after the revolution in 1688, were the first fruits of the superior moral sense preserved in England by the dissenters; and the strict manners of the methodists, who emanated from these societies, may be traced to the puritans. The modern associations for the suppression of vice, and for the observance of the Sabbath, find their most zealous members and patrons among the dissenters, who have, by these and other means, elevated the standard of public morals. And as the Reformation compelled the *popish* clergy to adopt a more correct

exterior; the influence and increase of dissenters often obliges the *established* clergy to regulate their conduct, so as to avoid odious comparisons. Even this constrained morality is advantageous to society; because, although it will *not* render either the parson or his parishioners real Christians, it precludes the triumphs of avowed and open vices, which would otherwise be sanctioned by usage and custom, as by common law.

Even the infidel tory, Hume, who has so zealously laboured to whitewash the Stuarts, acknowledges that the English owe their *free* constitution to the struggles of the puritans. And the dissenters have the same civil right as others to vote for legislators, who will express their mind in the debates of the senate. This right they have generally exercised in favour of civil liberty. And if, as Fuller observes, in all political changes the pulpits of the established church are made of the *same* wood as the council board; it is well for the liberties of England, to have *other* pulpits, which do *not* resound with panegyrics upon despotic measures.

Mr. Howe, whose penetrating eye had seen much of the interior of courts, declared, that the great cause of the hostility of governments to dissenters, was their known abhorrence of arbitrary rule. The tyrannous house of Stuart reproached them as an unyielding race, who could not be won to sacrifice their country's liberties; and the high tory churchmen, who favoured the exiled dynasty, have ever been implacable foes to the cause of dissent.

But princes, the least unfriendly to the liberty of the people, have always been most desirous of extending the benefits of the toleration act, and of abolishing the odious and impolitic restrictions of the *test-laws*; and the most zealous partisans for public freedom have usually deemed it consistent to advocate the cause of dissenters. As the very existence of churches, dissenting from the state religion, is an avowal of the duty of thinking for ourselves, and of the right of dif-

fering in matters of religious conscience, from our civil rulers, the patriot prince, or minister, alone, can look favourably on this indication of a free spirit,—while the lovers of passive submission, of exclusive claims, of church establishments, must regard it with abhorrence and alarm.

If the mere political reformer deny the obligations of England to the influence of dissenters in the civil state, the Christian patriot must own religious liberty to be the offspring of dissent. The puritans and non-conformists pleaded only for the right of enjoying their own sentiments, because they were true; but the dissenters, their successors, have added the benevolence that contends for the liberty of every man to profess whatever he thinks requisite to his own eternal safety.

Nay, even within the pale of the establishment, dissenters have diffused a portion of religious liberty. So much has the continual increase of separatists lowered the haughty tone of the *ultras* and *formalists*, among the English hierarchy, that they now profess to plead for their own existence. It is highly consoling to observe the influence of dissenters, in compelling the establishment to be less notoriously rigid towards her own sons. It is now full half a century since the first faint appearance of the evangelicals among the state clergy, who have, at length, increased into what the formal dignitaries denounce, as a dangerous schism in the establishment.

But instead of the sterner inquisitions, which cast out the puritans, and cut off the nonconformists, the present ecclesiastical governors of England have recourse to such paltry persecution of stipendiary curates, and pious presentees, as fully demonstrates their own fear and weakness, as well as their hatred to the doctrines of the reformation, contained in their articles, homilies, and liturgy. Whatever inclination the formalists exhibit to expel the evangelical clergy from the establishment, they dare not, now, by another Bartholomew-act, give the dissenters a decided pre-

ponderance, by adding to their numbers such a formidable host of piety, talent, learning, wealth, wisdom, influence, and power.

Nations are, too generally, supposed to prosper, in proportion as they extend their conquests; yet it is *not* the extent of territory, but the number of people, their industrious habits, their correct morals, their superior comforts, and their intellectual eminence, which form the prosperity and permanence of a nation. The voice of history attests, that these important objects have been always promoted, precisely in proportion as *religion* has prevailed. But nations cannot expect the advantages of religion, unless they afford it the protection and liberty which it demands, deserves, and repays.

While Spain, by completely extinguishing the free spirit of the reformation, sunk, in spite of her immense physical advantages, into a feeble, decrepid state,—Holland, by a more liberal policy, rose to a rank far beyond its mere territorial claims. The spirit of religious liberty, cherished by dissenters, in spite of all the efforts of the church establishment to crush it beneath the iron hoofs of persecution, enabled the little British Isles to contend successfully, during five and twenty years of unexampled warfare, against the portentous power of revolutionary France.

The mental vigour, produced by free discussion of the most important of all subjects, *religion*, is not only favourable to intellectual eminence in every other department, but is, also, an incitement to physical exertion, multiplying the productions of the soil; while the temperance of religious sects husbands private capital, the germ of national wealth. The full effects of this spirit may be seen in these United States; where the men, driven from England by an intolerant and persecuting church establishment, have, in their descendants and followers, grown up into a mighty empire, which regards religious liberty as its palladium; and suffers no exclusive

national sect to impede productive industry by an oppressive tithe tax; or to proscribe the effectual exertion of public talents by religious tests.

Besides exciting a disposition for physical and mental exertion, the dissenters have promoted national prosperity, by the free spirit, which has compelled the British government to respect public opinion; and thus, often prevented despotic measures at home, and destructive schemes abroad. The royal and clerical persecutors, who revoked the edict of Nantz, signed the death-warrant of the sixteenth Louis. And had not the efforts of the Stuarts, and of their established church, to crush the dissenters, been foiled by the revolution, which brought in William of Orange and religious toleration, England, probably, long ere this, would have been bleeding at every pore, under the stabs and gashes of her *radical* assassins. So intimately connected are clerical oppression and infidel revolution.

If, unhappily for France, her ignorant princes, and bigoted priests, discovered the value of their protestant countrymen, only by their loss,—it is well for Britain, that her civil government and church establishment have *not* been left to learn how much *more* pernicious would be the repeal of the toleration act, than was the revocation of the edict of Nantz.

The dissenting congregations of England, consisting, almost entirely, of those, to whom religion has given abundance, and taught benevolence; or of such as feel it their duty to work with their hands, that they may eat their own bread, and have to give to him that needeth; do *not* contribute to swell the multitude of those who live on the parish, but help to feed the poor, as well as to maintain the priesthood, of another communion. And it is susceptible of proof, that their industry, capital, mental energy, and public spirit, give greater circulation to wealth, and more impulse to commerce, manufactures, and national revenue, than is derived from an equal number in the established church.

These, and similar considerations should induce the dominant communion to feel towards those who dissent from them, that spirit of charity, which neither envies their liberty, nor repines at their prosperity. And hence, dissenters should learn to improve to the utmost, their advantageous distinction; and never forfeit the character of public benefactors, whatever treatment they may receive from the rest of their countrymen; remembering, that the God whom they serve, has decreed, that "*his people shall be among the nations as a dew from the Lord, as showers upon the grass, which tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.*"

If the want of a church establishment necessarily tends, either to wear out or to prevent the existence of Christianity in a country, how happens it that the Anglican Church, ever since its establishment at the Reformation, has so generally *persecuted* pure, evangelical religion; whether detected in its own members or in those of other communions?

A very brief eyeglance at the ecclesiastical history of the church of England would show, that a pure faith and a holy life are *not* always in the best possible odour with a national establishment. The Anglican Church kept up a pretty steady and unre-mitted fire of persecution against Christian piety, under the Tudors and Stuarts; from the ejecting of the puritans by Elizabeth, to the Bartholomew and other flagitious acts of the last Charles and James.

And although the toleration act of the third William prevents open and avowed legal persecution, either of dissenters or of conformists; yet the British government, *at this hour*, cautiously abstains from promoting evangelical men; men who support the Bible Society, missions to the heathen, the instruction of the poor, and every other means of extending the Redeemer's kingdom; and the English bishops, generally, labour strenuously to stifle every spark of evangelism in the state church; by throwing obsta-

cles in the way of pious candidates for orders; by driving curates from their dioceses; by refusing to countersign the testimonials of presentees; and by frowning upon incumbents, who plead guilty to the charges of preaching the pure Gospel, and of performing faithfully their pastoral duties.

William of Orange was a stanch friend to religious toleration, and would not permit any persecution for conscience's sake during his reign; for which he was continually vilified and calumniated, as long as he lived, by the great body of the established clergy. Whereas Ann, a veritable Stuart, weak, bigoted and intolerant, was a prodigious favourite with all the ultras and high-flyers of the state church.

Before we glance at the brief outline of facts showing how much the Anglican Church establishment has injured herself, and the whole British empire, and the best interests of Christianity, by her own formalism, and persecution of other religious sects, it is but justice to premise, that the house of Hanover, treading in the footsteps of the illustrious William, the great father of English toleration, has always discouraged persecution on account of religious creeds and opinions.

The primary act of the reign of George the first, was to defeat the *schism* bill, an iniquitous measure, with which Ann, a silly woman, and, like her father, fraudulent and persecuting, closed her mischievous life. The infidel St. John, whom Ann made viscount Bolingbroke, stood forth, at this time, the sanctimonious champion of the established church of England.

Ann's cabinet ministers, the civil guardians and patrons of the ecclesiastical establishment, having planned the destruction of the dissenters, deemed the means most effectual for the accomplishment of their nefarious scheme to be, the depriving their children of an education according to their own principles; and reducing them to the alternative of remaining untaught, or of being episcopally trained.

A clause was, therefore, inserted in the bill, brought into the house of commons by sir William Wyndham, on the 12th of May, 1714—"that no person should keep any public or private school, or seminary to teach or instruct youth, as tutor, or schoolmaster, unless he subscribed a declaration, that he would conform to the liturgy of the church of England, as by law established, and have a *license* from the archbishop, bishop, or ordinary of the place, under his seal of office; under penalty of three months imprisonment, on conviction of teaching without these qualifications. No license could be granted, unless the applicant produced a certificate that he had received the Anglican Church Sacrament within the year. If, *after* this, the schoolmaster was present at any conventicle, or worship, other than that of the English church, he was liable to three months imprisonment, and thenceforth disqualified for teaching. The next clause provided, that if any one so licensed should teach any other than the common prayer book catechism, his license should be void, and he be liable to the penalties of the act.

Cruel and shocking as are these provisions, the bill was yet more severe, as it was drafted by bishop Atterbury, lord Bolingbroke, and sir William Wyndham; but Harley, lord Oxford, expunged the most persecuting clauses, that had been penned by a bishop of a protestant establishment, and an infidel lay peer, sitting in felicitous conjunction for the support of the national church.

The bill was carried through the house of commons, by two hundred and thirty-seven against one hundred and twenty-six votes. In the house of lords, the atheist, Bolingbroke, and the bishop of London, spoke stoutly in support of the bill; the worthy prelate urging, that the dissenters made this measure necessary, by their endeavours to propagate schism, and draw churchmen's children to their schools.

The dissenters were *not* permitted to be heard by counsel against the bill; and the motion of lord Halifax, to allow them schools for the instruction of *their own* children, was rejected. The bill was to extend to Ireland; and was finally carried by seventy-seven against seventy-two votes. On the 25th of June, 1714, it received the royal assent, and was to go into operation on the first of August following.

Twenty-six lay peers, and five bishops, namely, of Ely, Bangor, St. Asaph, Landaff, and Lincoln, entered their *protest* against this act, on the lords' journals; because they could *not* apprehend the danger, recited in the bill, to ensue from the dissenters to the church and state, since no dissenter can, by law, hold any station likely to render him dangerous. And if dissenters were dangerous, experience proves that severity is *not* so effectual to reduce them to the national church, as kindness; *more* dissenters having been reconciled to the church, since the act of toleration, passed the 24th of May, 1689, than in all the time, since the act of uniformity, passed in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, to the time of passing the toleration act: scarcely one considerable family in England being now in communion with dissenters.

Severity may make hypocrites, but not converts. Nay, if severity could be supposed ever to be of use, *this* is not the time for it, when we are threatened with much greater danger to our church and nation, (from the ascendancy of France, and the infection of popery,) against which protestant dissenters have joined, and are willing to join with us in our defence; we should not drive them from us by enforcing a law against them, compelling them, either to breed their children in a way they do not approve, or to leave them uninstructed.

This was little expected from the established church, after the act of toleration, and repeated declarations from the throne and parliament, against all *persecution*, which is the peculiar badge, the avowed doctrine and practice of the Roman church.

In all instances of making and executing laws against dissenters, the *design* was to weaken the church, and to drive them into concert with the papists, for its destruction. Such was the suggestion of popish councils, to prepare them for the successive declarations of Charles the second, and for the one issued by James the second, to ruin all our civil and religious rights. And we cannot think the contrivances of papists to *subvert*, are the means to *preserve* our church; at a time, too, when we are more in danger of popery than ever, by the designs of the pretender, supported by the French king, who is engaged to extirpate our religion; and by great numbers in England, professedly in his interests.

But if the dissenters should not be provoked by this severity to concur in their country's destruction, and the overthrow of protestantism; yet this bill may drive them from England, to the prejudice of its manufactures, which, having been gained by persecution *abroad*, may be lost by persecution *at home*.

In Ireland, the consequences of this bill may be fatal, since the papists there far outnumber the protestants, of all denominations; and if the dissenters be treated as enemies to that church and state, with whom they have always joined against the enemies of their common religion, the protestants, thus unnecessarily divided, are exposed to another massacre, and their religion to extirpation. And the Scots, whose national church is presbyterian, will not, very heartily, join with us in our defence, when they see how hardly we treat those of the same nation, the same blood, and the same religion. It is the more grievous to the protestant dissenters in Ireland to be thus excluded from all toleration, because the popish priests are registered, and exercise their religion unmolested.

It would be difficult to find, in the penal code of any country, a law more iniquitous than this *schism* bill of Bolingbroke, Atterbury and Ann. The English dissenters had, from the revolution, enjoyed the

benefits of the toleration act, gratefully and peaceably. They neither opposed nor intrigued against the government, as did the great mass of the *established* clergy, during the whole reign of William.

As a reward for their loyalty, the state church, in conjunction with an avowed, unprincipled, profligate infidel, who hated and reviled Christianity in every form, brought forward and enacted a law for their destruction. A law full of the most odious and despicable provisions; a law to deprive parents of the right of educating their own children, and of consigning them to the tuition of persons of their own religious persuasion; a law forbidding ministers to teach any other catechism than that contained in the common prayer book, which exhibits, by no means, so comprehensive a system of Christian instruction as do the catechisms of many other protestant churches; and which is far inferior to those of Edward the sixth, and of dean Nowell; a law rendering the teacher of any other catechism, however excellent, liable to imprisonment, and incapacity for further tuition; a law depriving, at one blow, many who had dedicated their time and talents to the instruction of youth, of all means of subsistence, and consigning them, their wives and little ones, to hopeless penury, for no crime, and without a cause; a law discouraging the diffusion of learning, when at least *one-fourth* of the population of the British isles could not master the alphabet; a law framed, too, after the most solemn promises given by both houses of parliament, and by the queen herself, that the act of toleration should remain inviolate.

What *might* have been the consequences of this flagitious bill, conceived in the tender mercies of the established church, is, fortunately for England, only a matter of conjecture; for, on the first of August, 1714, the day on which it was to begin to operate, Ann passed from an earthly crown, to await her sentence at a tribunal where she will be judged, *not* as a queen, but as any other sinner. In consequence of

the accession of the house of Hanover, all the members of which have been the uniform friends of religious liberty, the *schism* bill was not allowed to go into effect; and of those two stout champions of the Anglican Church, Bolingbroke and Oxford, the successful plotters against Marlborough, and Godolphin, and Somers, and the national glory and strength of England, the one was exiled to France, and the other committed to the tower of London.

It is worthy of notice, that all formalists and persecutors, in church and state establishments, who are most zealous for excluding all religious denominations, save their own, from every public place of profit, honour, or trust, never express the least apprehension of evil to result from the indiscriminate admission of men, who, avowedly, have *no* religion, into all offices. Yet those, who own no religious obligation to duty, nor any religious restraint from evil, must, unquestionably, be the most injurious to society; notwithstanding the assertion of Mr. Bayle, that a community of *atheists* would make a much better body politic, than a community of Christians. An assertion triumphantly refuted by bishop Warburton, in his "Divine Legation," and by M. Montesquieu, in his "Esprit des Loix."

Indeed, as revelation forms the *only* basis of moral obligation, public and private, it is quite vain to expect, either individual happiness, or national prosperity, or elevation of character, in the total absence of all religious faith and practice.

It will be no easy matter, however, to dilute the venom of sectarian bigotry; at the bottom of which lies an evil heart of unbelief, and a perfect hatred of all spiritual things. This unchristian intolerance is of its father, the devil, who was a liar and a murderer from the beginning;—it is the same spirit, hot from hell, which has prompted all the persecutions of the wicked against the righteous, from the time when Cain slew his brother, because Abel's heart was better affected towards God than his own, down to the

present hour of controversial misrepresentation, malice and calumny.

A thorough-bred sectarian considers an avowed infidel, as less obnoxious than the most exemplary Christian of a persuasion different from his own. The duke of Orleans applied to Louis the fourteenth, to appoint a particular friend of his to a certain office. The king said no,—because his father confessor, a devout Jesuit, had informed him, that the man was a Jansenist. Sire, replied the duke, my friend is no Jansenist; he does not believe in any God, he is an atheist. The French monarch, his most Christian majesty, the protector of the established church in his dominions, finding the applicant only an atheist, and not belonging to the only portion of the Gallican Church that ever exhibited any symptoms of Christian piety, forthwith gave him the desired appointment.

In passing, may I be pardoned for recommending to my younger readers, Blaise Pascal's "Provincial Letters." In this book, the lax morals, the sophistical reasoning, and spurious religion, of the Jesuits, are exposed in the fullest manner, by the united forces of truth, piety, genius, eloquence, wit, and learning.

In truth, some who are *not* professed Jesuits, among our modern heads and guardians of a church establishment, seem to incline as much more favourably to infidelity and atheism, than to evangelism, as did Louis and his jesuitical confessor. Bishop Tomline, in the fourth chapter of his "Refutation of Calvinism," when treating of universal redemption, election, and reprobation, says:—

"The preservation of this most pure and reformed part of the Christian church, the church of England, must ever, under the blessing of God, greatly depend upon the exertions of the parochial clergy. Not many years since, they were called upon to resist the open attacks of infidelity and atheism; and, at present, they have to contend with the more secret,

but *not less dangerous* attempts of schism and enthusiasm. In tracing the coherence, says Mr. Hume, among the systems of modern theology, we may observe, that the doctrine of absolute decrees has ever been intimately connected with the enthusiastic spirit:" &c.

The remarks of the Rev. Thomas Scott, upon this singular effusion of his own diocesan, are worthy of remembrance: "Are, then," he asks, "the evangelical clergy in the church, and the Calvinist dissenters, according to the latitude in which that term is used in the *Refutation*, as *dangerous* enemies to genuine Christianity, as infidels and atheists? No; this is not intended; but they are as dangerous to the national establishment. In what respect? To the *real* religious interests of the establishment; that is, its subserviency to the success of true Christianity, in England and in the world?

"The evangelical clergy, I must be allowed to think, are peculiarly useful in promoting the genuine interests of the national church, in this respect; and would be much more so, were they not *systematically* thwarted and counteracted by powerful opponents. I must, indeed, allow, that the efforts and success of the dissenters are formidable to the establishment; yet, surely, *no Christian* will say, that the increase of avowed infidels and atheists in the same proportion as dissenters have lately multiplied, would not be far more formidable to the cause of Christianity, and to that of the church of England; or that the nation had not better be filled with dissenters, holding the grand and leading doctrines of the Gospel, in a practical manner, than with infidels and atheists!

"The advice given by a person high in authority to one who complained of the success of dissenters, was, to *outpreach*, *outpray*, and *outlive* them. This states the *only* method of preventing their final preponderance. The English clergy, in general, from the highest dignitary to the meanest curate, must be *more* zealous

and scriptural; *more* instant in season, out of season, *ευκαιρως ακαιρως*, in preaching; *more* fervent and constant in prayer, and *more* holy and heavenly in their lives and example, in all respects, than the dissenting teachers are, if they would effectually stop their progress. All other methods will be found by experience to be mere palliatives.

“ I should not have previously supposed that a protestant bishop would have deigned to quote the infidel Hume in such an argument; who, as might easily be proved, showed as much ignorance when he presumed to write about religion, as he did sound and accurate information on other subjects; and who never, throughout his whole history, meets with any thing like Christianity among papists or protestants, Calvinists or Arminians, churchmen or dissenters, but he shows most clearly his bitter enmity and sovereign contempt of it; and that always in proportion as the enemy to be assailed approximates to the religion of the New Testament. I disdain to answer Hume’s accusation of enthusiasm. I only deny its truth; and I rejoice that *his* testimony is against us; it is the highest applause which such a man was capable of bestowing on religious characters.”

Notwithstanding these conclusive remarks of Mr. Scott, our American Tomlines persist in declaring “ that the evangelical clergy of the church of England will destroy that church, unless they are speedily put down; but *they* will take care the evangelicals shall never have any footing in *their* church.” But after all that may be said or done, *finis coronat opus*; and we may, peradventure, yet live to see the grace of God shed abroad upon our American-Anglo-Churches; and *if it be*, it will, undoubtedly, prove too hard for its opponents, and their own legitimate master too.

How ignorant of the genius of Christianity, and of the very elements of human nature itself, have religious persecutors always shown themselves. Their

object seems to be, the extermination of all those who presume to differ in opinion from them; whereas, the experience of all time shows, that mere persecution has never yet been able to subdue truth, or to repress error.

Francis the first, of France, did *not* stifle the flame of protestantism, even in his own dominions, when instigated by the established clergy, in order to expiate the crime of some anonymous writings against the mummery of the mass, he, together with his three sons, bareheaded, carried a torch in his hand, at a procession and public prayers; and commanded, that in the middle of the four most frequented parts of Paris, *eight* of the reformed should be *burned alive*. And thirty-two protestants were, accordingly, committed to the flames, as an edifying spectacle for the good Parisians.

This was the natural consequence of so identifying a national or established church with Christianity, as to make a separation from its pale the test of heresy. How much more execrable is papal than pagan persecution! Upon the very substance and essence of heathen worship did the first Christians innovate; denouncing it as absurd, corrupt, ruinous. But the innovation of the protestants did *not* touch one single, fundamental, essential point of Christianity. They separated from the polluted and polluting circumstances of Rome, which her secular, formal, established hierarchy, by the very fact of persecution, exalt above all the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel.

As persecution and falsehood are inseparably allied, Francis, who was courting the aid of the protestant princes in Germany, to support him against the power of his formidable rival, Charles the fifth, declared publicly, that he had only burned thirty-two anabaptists for seditious and turbulent practices. In order to refute this infamous calumny, John Calvin addressed to the French king the admirable dedication to his Christian Institutes; a composition, which Alexander Morus ranks with the preface of president de Thou, Thuanus, to his history, and the

preface of Casaubon to his Polybius, as one of the three masterpieces of the age. Of course Calvin's lucubrations did *not* edify Francis, who never read them; religious formalists and persecutors having no desire to be convinced of truth, or induced to humanity.

On his accession to the English throne, George the first, in answer to an address from the protestant dissenting ministers in and about London, said, "I take this occasion, also, to express to you my firm purpose, to do all in my power for supporting and maintaining the churches of England and Scotland, as they are severally by law established; which I am of opinion may be effectually done without the least impairing the toleration, allowed by law to protestant dissenters; so agreeable to Christian charity, and so necessary to the trade and riches of this kingdom."

What a noble contrast this declaration of the English monarch forms to the answer of Charles the fifth of Germany, when it was represented to him, that he would ruin his Hungarian dominions, if he continued thus rigorously to persecute the protestants there:—"I would rather," replied the emperor, "see Hungary one vast wilderness, than permit a single heretic to live therein."

A speech quite worthy of one of the eldest sons of the pope; the Roman pontiff's functions being, says cardinal Bellarmin, twofold; the one to feed the church, commanded in John, chap. 21, v. 16, where our Saviour says, "feed my sheep;" the other, to put heretics to death, enjoined in Acts, chap. 10, v. 13, in these words, "Rise, Peter, *kill* and eat." But the benevolent cardinal has *not* carried throughout his own mode of Scripture interpretation; for, according to this scheme of exposition, it is not only the pope's function to kill heretics, but likewise to *eat* all that he kills.

George the first, also, sensible of the attachment of the dissenters to his family and government, gave them an annual donation. Five hundred pounds

sterling were given in 1720, for the use of the indigent widows of dissenting ministers. Soon after, the same sum was paid half-yearly, for assisting ministers who wanted relief; or for such purposes as the distributors might think most beneficial to the dissenting body. Finally, the yearly donation was increased to two thousand pounds; which is continued to be paid by the British sovereign at this day.

Nor did George the second degenerate from his father, in this respect. For when Mr. Whitfield was ordered to attend at the house of commons, to give information as to the state of the new colony of Georgia, he was received kindly by the speaker, and assured that there would be *no* persecution in George the second's reign. And when some dignitaries of the established church commenced a prosecution in the spiritual court, the English Inquisition, against Dr. Doddridge, for the crime of teaching an academy at Northampton, the king, on being informed of this exhibition of clerical intolerance, expressly commanded the prosecution to be stopped.

Thus did the king of England again confirm the declaration made by him, on ascending the throne, "that, during his reign, there should be no persecution for conscience's sake." A declaration which he repeated, when it was represented to him, that those profound theologians, the English rabble, instigated by the established clergy, and country justices, inflicted their usual arguments of mud missiles, stones, and manual violence, upon Mr. Wesley, and his followers. Accordingly, when no redress from these grievances could be obtained from the rural magistrates, the court of king's bench did prompt and ample justice on the rioters; and the Arminian Methodists were permitted to labour unmolested in their vocation.

George the third, also, in answer to an address presented to him by the London dissenting ministers, on his accession to the throne in 1760, said,—“you may

be assured of my protection ; and of my care and attention to support the protestant interest, and to maintain the toleration inviolable."

To the honour of the British sovereign, this declaration was faithfully kept ; and the religious liberties of England continued unimpaired ; notwithstanding the rapid growth of dissenters, owing to the superior zeal and activity of their ministers ; as compared with the listlessness and drowsy formalism of the great body of the established clergy. The venerable monarch treated with catholic liberality the dissenters attached to his royal household. They never experienced the least diminution of favour, on account of their religious tenets ; but the king took pains to accommodate them, that they might attend their own places of worship.

The same liberal spirit towards their domestics and dependents was exhibited by his children. In 1802, the duke of York, as commander in chief of the English army, issued a general order, that no soldier in the British service should be compelled to attend any mode of worship, which he did not, or be prevented from following any which he did, approve. It were well, if some of the English nobility and gentry, attached to the state church, and who persecute their tenants and dependents on account of their religious opinions, instances of which I myself saw in the winter of 1821-2, would follow this laudable example of their superiors.

Nor has the present reign been disgraced by any government persecution, on the score of religion. So far from it, that an attempt at intolerance, in a very tender point, and under peculiar circumstances, met with the most decided disapprobation.

In the year 1820, when party feelings were exceedingly exasperated on all sides, pending the trial of the late English queen, an unlucky chaplain to a Scottish regiment, quartered in Edinburgh, ventured in his prayer, after the close of his sermon, to beseech God that he would have mercy upon and bless her

majesty. The commanding officer of the regiment, a very devout soldier, and a most loyal theologian, instantly placed the reverend orator under military arrest; and forthwith sent notice thereof, together with an account of the flagrant crime committed, to the secretary of state for the home department.

By return of post, the home secretary sent down an order for the preacher's release, accompanied by a gentle objurgation of the learned colonel, whose zeal, in this instance, had *not* been according to knowledge. How far the inflicting martial punishment on a Scottish presbyterian clergyman for exercising his vocation in praying for whom he listeth, is an encroachment upon the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the kirk of Scotland, established under the articles of union agreed to between the two nations, in the reign of Ann, is left for the wisdom of civilians to determine.

The fact of the immediate release of the reverend prisoner from durance vile, shows that the British government, under George the fourth, is *not* inclined to persecute men on account of their religious opinions or feelings; otherwise, as the causes of personal exasperation in this particular case were abundant, and had long been known to all the world, it might have called down a little ministerial benediction upon the luckless wight who had presumed to interpose his opinion, even in his prayers.

In 1821, the Madagascar prince, sent to London in consequence of the treaty between the king of Madagascar and the governor of the Mauritius, was present at a meeting of the London Missionary Society; and during the discussion of the members present, he discovered that the society did *not* belong to the established or state church. He, therefore, repaired to Carlton-House, to inquire of the king if *he* approved of such men sending out missionaries to the island of Madagascar?

The British monarch replied, that although the society did not belong to his established church, yet that they agreed with it in all the essentials of reli-

gion, differing only in circumstantial; that they would send out quite proper missionaries, and that any kindness shown by the king of Madagascar to the missionaries of the London society, he, George the fourth, would consider as a personal obligation to himself.

But the tolerant spirit of William of Orange, and of all the members of the house of Hanover, during so many generations, has *not yet* taught the established hierarchy to abstain from persecution. In the month of August, 1820, an English bishop drove a curate out of his diocese for the crime of evangelism, in preaching the doctrines of the Cross of Christ; the doctrines of the Reformation; the doctrines of the liturgy, articles and homilies of the Anglican Church; doctrines so humbling to the pride of the unregenerate heart; so exclusively glorifying to the Saviour, as necessarily to inflame the wrath of every diocesan, who sets up the mystical notion of baptismal regeneration, in preference to the Scriptural tenet of spiritual conversion.

The following letter from the ejected curate breathes a truly apostolic spirit, which, however it might now be despised by the lordly prelate who drove him out, may yet be remembered on that day, when both bishop and curate will appear before the Judge of the quick and the dead, to render an account of their respective stewardships. The letter was written in answer to one addressed to the persecuted curate by a pious layman, attached to a dissenting chapel, and who had made some kind tenders of personal service; dictated by that evangelical spirit, which breaks down the sectarian barriers that keep asunder the nominal, formal Christians of different denominations.

C—n, Monday, August 4th, 1820.

J. F. G—, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your kind letter should not have remained so long unanswered, had I not been, all this

while, undecided as to my destination. I have, at length, accepted a curacy at P——, to which place I propose removing with my family, in about three weeks. My new rector is ——. The duty, I believe, is very considerable, and the salary one hundred pounds (four hundred and forty-four dollars and forty-four cents) a year, without a house; but on many accounts I rejoice at the prospect before me, and cannot but see and acknowledge the good hand of my God upon me, in removing me from O—— to a place of greater labour and trust in the Lord's vineyard.

I was becoming too much attached to O——, and the many temporal comforts and kind friends that surrounded me there; and had long been making no progress, and, consequently, backsliding in spiritual things. But the Lord has been digging about me, and loosening my roots, and transplanting me; and all to make me bring forth fruit to the praise of the glory of his grace. I was sure the chastisement was laid upon me in love, and that it would work for my good in the end; and I am not disappointed; for it has been the means, *not*, as some of my friends hoped, of advancing my worldly interests, but of adding to my spiritual blessings.

And now, my dear sir, I desire to thank you for all you so kindly say about my coming to E——, and for the truly Christian love and concern you express for me. I should, no doubt, have derived much comfort and improvement from your society, and others of the Lord's people, in that city; but He who fixes the bounds of our habitations has been pleased to order otherwise; and happy is it for us when we are taught, and enabled to choose for ourselves, what he chooses for us.

As moor-shooting is begun, I conclude lord S—— is in S——, and shall therefore enclose this to him at A—— castle. He is much in my prayers: he is remembered in my poor way, and commended to Him, who is able to make all grace abound to his dear

children. I trust dear lord S—— is in that happy number ; but what a snare are rank, and riches, and health, and strength, and spirits ! Still grace will overcome where it is given ; and even consecrate all these to the Master's use. I have some hopes, and many fears about him. How happy should I be to hear of his being, *decidedly*, a follower of the Lamb, and no longer halting between two opinions.

Mrs. C—— desires to unite in kind Christian regard to you and yours, with, my dear sir, very truly and affectionately, your's in the Lord Jesus,

S—— C——.

In 1821, an English bishop, well known for his theological opinions and lucubrations, condescended to assign his reasons for casting a curate out of his diocese ; a condescension *not* often practised by the Anglican hierarchy, who generally suspend the clerical stipendiaries without deigning to say for what cause, save their own sovereign will.

In the summer of 1821, Mr. M—— was sent for by his diocesan, and ordered to quit his curacy instantly, and never again to preach within the diocese of L——, because he had been guilty of three irregularities ; to wit : preaching from notes, interfering with the parish singers, and reading prayers in an unconsecrated place.

In self-defence the poor curate urged, that preaching from notes was neither uncanonical, nor unscriptural ; that it was long the habit of the church of England, subsequent to the Reformation ; and that Charles the second himself had issued his proclamation against the clergy *reading* their sermons, as an irreverent, lazy, slovenly custom. That he had only so far interfered with the parish singers, as to induce them to desist from using light, jiggish, frivolous tunes ; and to adopt graver, and more solemn airs. That, in consequence of some very aged and infirm women, who lived at the extremity of the scattered, straggling parish he served, being unable to come to church,

he had read the prayers, and expounded the scriptures to them in a private room contiguous to their dwellings.

The bishop replied, that he would suffer no curates to preach in his diocese, unless they read either written or printed sermons; that he would not have the psalms sung to any methodistical tunes; and that he would, on no account, permit the church service to be performed in an unconsecrated place. For which reasons, Mr. M—— was suspended from his curacy, and prohibited from ever again acting as curate in the diocese of L——.

In the spring of 1822, the Rev. Mr. S—— was invited to officiate as minister at a chapel recently erected in B——, under the late act of parliament for building new churches. Mr. S. waited upon the bishop of the diocese in which the chapel stood, to know when his lordship would give him a license. The prelate, a younger branch of a noble house, and illustrious in himself for nothing so much as his perfect hatred of all evangelism, said, that unless he would promise never to visit or pray by the sick in the parish where the new chapel stood, he should *not* be licensed.

The presentee answered, that he could not, in conscience, make such a promise, because he considered it an important part of a Christian minister's duty to visit, and pray for and with the sick and the afflicted. Whereupon the bishop said,—“then I will not license you; and, to tell you the truth, I am glad to get rid of you at any rate.”

Mr. S——, accordingly, did *not* obtain a license; and the chapel is now possessed by a formal, secular incumbent, after his diocesan's own heart.

Is the full, arbitrary, irresponsible power, given by the legislature to the Anglican bishops, of suspending curates; of refusing to countersign the testimonials of presentees; of denying licenses to supply new chapels; peculiarly calculated to render the English established church an effectual instru-

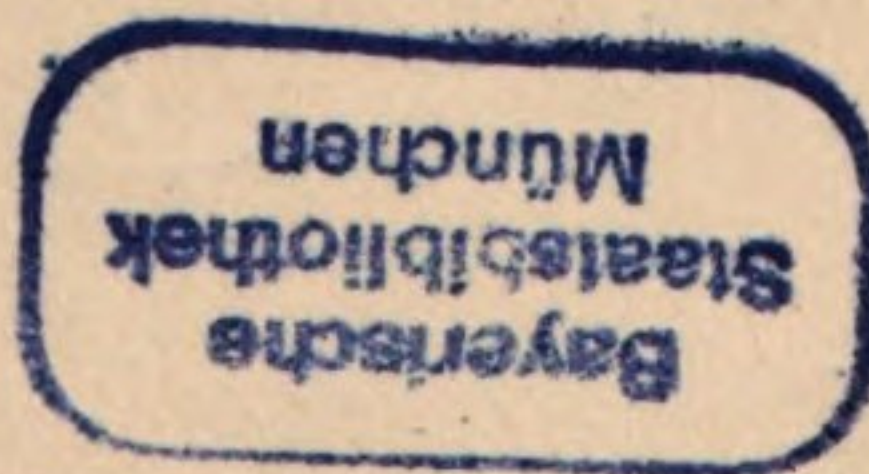
ment, to diffuse religion throughout the country, and to stop the progress of heathenism and infidelity? Let the question be answered by the actual state and conduct of the great body of the clergy and laity of that church, now, after nearly three hundred years trial of the experiment.

The arbitrary power given by the British government to its bishops, and their abuse of that power, call forth the following animadversions of the Christian Observer of 1820. Be it noted, that the Christian Observer is both a competent, and a credible witness on this occasion; for he is by far the most powerful advocate for the Anglican Church and state establishment, that has yet appeared; if we except Mr. Wilks's elaborate and able work.

We cannot, says the Christian Observer, pass over a circumstance, which has undergone discussion in the house of lords, and which is of alarming importance, not only to the clergy, but to every one connected with ecclesiastical property; or who values, either the welfare of the church of England, or the liberty of the subject.

A petition was presented by the Rev. I. P. Jones, curate of North Bovey, Devonshire, stating that he had been presented to two livings, value, 500*l.* per annum; one in the diocese of Peterborough, the other in that of Lincoln; that he had procured a regular testimonial, signed by three clergymen, in the diocese where he officiated; which testimonial should be *countersigned* by his diocesan, bishop of Exeter, who refused; whence the preferment was lost to the petitioner, it being necessary to present the livings to another clergyman, to prevent their lapsing to the bishops of the dioceses, where they were situated.

Mr. Jones surmised, that bishop Pelham's refusal was owing to his having attended a public meeting in favour of catholic emancipation. The bishop, however, subsequently, intimated, that he refused his counter signature, because Mr. Jones at that meeting



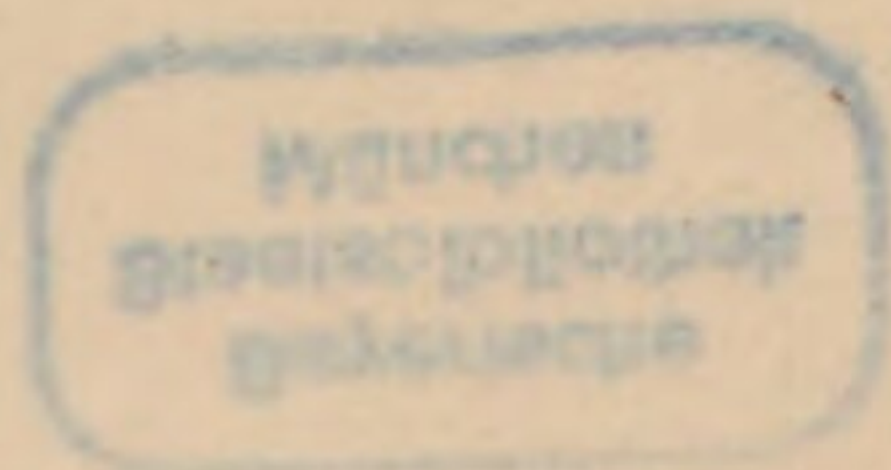
said that nine-tenths of the clergy disliked the dam-natory clauses in the Athanasian creed, and would rejoice if they were expunged.

Now, whether this be true or false, two points of this case are alarming; *first*, that the bishop rests his justification on his *discretionary* right to refuse his signature, without assigning a reason. *Secondly*, that relying on some private, and *ex parte* communication, he would *not* permit Mr. Jones to explain his words, which, he said, had been misrepresented; nor to produce counter testimony.

Thus, then, all the ecclesiastical patronage in England, rests on the will, nay, on the caprice, the prejudice, the pique, the political bias, or partial information of an individual. The lord chancellor, Eldon, himself, who advocated the bishop's right and power so to act, without assigning any cause, has no security, that the next clerk, whom *he* presents to a living, provided he happen to be evangelical, may not be rejected for want of a bishop's counter signature.

This counter signature has hitherto been deemed an official act, the refusal of which subjected a prelate to a civil action; but as the law *now* stands, he may refuse; and when the living, to which a clergyman is presented, lies in a diocese different from that where he resides, neither he, nor the patron, has any remedy. As the house of lords refused to inquire into the subject, who can predict to what extent this new system of *stet pro ratione voluntas* may be carried? It is surprising that the upper house, generally such vigilant and zealous guardians of the rights of property and patronage, should have so slumbered in this business. Are the great *hereditary* patrons prepared to see their clerical nominees arbitrarily rejected, and the *money* value of their church patronage reduced in the market, for the sale and barter of church livings?

The English bishops, at present, possess a discretionary, arbitrary authority, intrusted to no other



order of men in the British empire; an authority. utterly inconsistent with the liberties of the subordinate clergy, and the good government of the state church. We shall never cease to protest, whether as to curates or incumbents, against this unwise and injurious system, which tends to convert every episcopal palace, in England, into an inquisition, or a star chamber, or a whispering gallery, and renders every clergyman in the establishment liable to become the victim of a secret calumny, or an unauthenticated slander.

At least, let the Anglican bishops be constrained to state the crime, to name the accuser, to produce the evidence. It is too much to presume of *any* order of men, *certainly*, of men made bishops by political patrons, on account of borough influence, or family connexion, or personal favour; in a word, any cause, save that of evangelical piety; that they never will be warped, or prejudiced, or misinformed. Even where they happen to act rightly in the exercise of their arbitrary irresponsible power, the benefit of example is lost to the clergy, and the public, for want of their reasons being assigned; if they act wrongly, the sufferer must pine in hopeless submission; having *no legal* right to demand what is his offence, or who are his accusers?

The English public is becoming interested, as well it might, in this question; and *some* modifications, both as to curates and incumbents, will be urgently proposed. Let the episcopal bench, therefore, do for themselves, what *ruder* hands may otherwise do, eventually, for them. In the present state of things, they *ought* not to wish to retain powers, which only tend, and most justly, to render themselves and their functions unpopular and odious, without benefiting either religion, or the established church.

But the universal page of history teaches us that neither secular governments, nor state churches, are apt to mend, or reform themselves. Yet the Anglican Church will do well, *at the present crisis*, to re-

member what the elder Pitt told the house of lords, not long before he died, and left his mantle to his illustrious son—"that unless they reformed themselves from *within*, the people would reform them from *without*, with a vengeance."

It is high time for the formal, secular clergy, in the Anglican Establishment, whether bishops, priests, or deacons, to learn, that in the existing feverish condition of the world, *popular opinion* is more powerful than the coalesced bayonets of allied sovereigns; and that the church of England *cannot* long exist, *malgré* her political prop in the civil government, unless she resorts to some *other* means of support, than the persecution of all evangelical doctrine and practice, urged with such unrelenting zeal, by the great body of the state clergy; from the lordly prelate, who drives curates from his diocese, and refuses his counter signatures, and denies his licenses, alike, without deigning to assign any cause, save his own arbitrary will; down to the most senseless ecclesiastical scribbler, who pelts the British and Foreign Bible Society with pitiable pamphlets.

If it were possible for persecuting formalists to profit by Christian instruction, I would recommend to the perusal of those high Anglican Church functionaries, who are always procinct to drive from out their clerical dominions every established clergyman, who happens to preach the gospel faithfully, the following observations from Mr. T. H. Horne, the distinguished author of an "Introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the holy Scriptures."

In his section on scripture parables, Mr. Horne says, the parable of the tares, Matt. xiii. 24, *et seq.* refers to the mixture of the wicked with the good in this world; when, therefore, our Lord intimated in verses 27—29, that it is *not* our province to judge those whom *He* has reserved for his own tribunal; and in the 30th verse added, let them *both* grow together; he evidently implied, that since God to-

lerates incorrigible sinners, it is the duty of men to bear with them ; the propagation of false doctrines is an offence against God, who *alone* is the judge and punisher of them ; man has *no* right to punish his brethren for their sentiments.

How much, *a fortiori*, is this position applicable, when the doctrines promulgated are *true* ; as in the case of the evangelical clergy in the church of England, whose preaching, their formal brethren in the establishment so incessantly labour to stifle in eternal silence?

Mr. Horne, also, cites the following explicit declaration of the learned Viser, a popish writer, who, in his *Hermeneutica Sacra*, referring to this parable, says,—*facile apparet, eos huic precepto nequaquam satisfacere, qui vi, metu, ac minis, homines student a suâ religione abducere*. Here, then, is an instance of a *papist* breathing a more tolerant Christian spirit, than some of the present generation of English protestant bishops.

Bishop Burnet, in his coronation sermon, preached before William and Mary, when they were crowned, made, among other valuable observations, the following remarks, worthy to be recorded for the edification of all those, who, in this late age of the world, still worship, with heart, and tongue, and hand, the demon of religious intolerance.

To put the frailties of men, says the good bishop, to trials, in their obedience, that are above human patience ; to exact of them that which is either impossible or unreasonable ; and to carry this rule too far into that which is God's immediate province, I mean men's *consciences* ; all this is *not* the ruling over men, either as men or as Christians. God himself has made his yoke easy ; and therefore, those who can pretend no higher than to be his vicegerents, should *not* exceed those limits, within which the Author of our being has restrained himself. Undue impositions, and unrelenting severities, or rigour, in

commanding, and a cruelty in punishing, must find patterns *elsewhere* than in God's governing the world, or Christ's governing the church.

If, indeed, all civil governments were as wise, in respect to the toleration of religious opinions, as the states of Holland exhibited themselves, in answer to a request of Lipsius, Christendom would, even now, present a far different face from any which she has yet been enabled to wear, during the whole period of her existence.

The erudite and consistent Lipsius wrote a book on *steadfastness*, and changed his own religious creed four times. In his work on politics, however, he asserted, that only one religion ought to be tolerated in a state, and that all who would not conform to the established church, should receive no other mercy than that of fire and sword. Cernheert refuted these intolerant and impious tenets; which produced a large crop of controversies, to the great discomfiture of Lipsius, who, like other formalists and bigots, preferring persecution to argument, requested the issuing a mandate, to prohibit the refutation of his own book on politics.

The Dutch rulers replied to his petition thus:—"either the asserted principles are true, and cannot be refuted; or false, and the state can expect no injury from such a discovery."

But really religious people are sometimes prone to persecute those who dissent from their creed. This is, indeed, a lamentable truth, and *so far* as pious people indulge themselves in persecution, they contradict both the spirit and the letter of that blessed religion, which they profess to believe and to uphold. It affords, also, an important practical inference, that if even religious and well educated persons be propense to persecute, whenever they possess the power; what are we to expect from irreligious, ignorant formalists? Which is, in itself, a potent reason why no sect or portion of the Christian church should be so linked with the civil govern-

ment, as to be able to gratify its appetite for intolerance and oppression.

When Luther began his tremendous battery from the press against popery, Henry the eighth, king of England, undertook to refute the heresy of the Saxon reformer. But as there is no royal road to theology, more than to mathematics, Henry was very roughly handled by Martin's superior talents and learning. As a set-off, however, for this lamentable defeat, the pope conferred upon him the title of *defender of the faith*; a title worn by all succeeding British sovereigns, and signally merited by those illustrious worthies, the Stuarts; from the first James to Anne, both inclusive.

This first English defender of the faith, having quarrelled with the pope, for not countenancing his divorce from Catharine of Arragon, and his marriage with Ann Boleyn, set up for a reformer; renounced all connexion with the bishop of Rome, and declared *himself* the supreme head of the church in England. Accordingly, he manifested his ecclesiastical impartiality by butchering alike both protestants and papists. He published the six Articles, generally called the bloody bill, as containing the creed of his established church. This law enacted transubstantiation, purgatory, clerical celibacy, and auricular confession. At one time he burned half a dozen papists and protestants together; the protestants for believing less, the papists for believing more, than this law of the state church allowed.

At length Henry closed a life of lust and blood, and now awaits his final doom at the bar of that Judge of the quick and the dead, who awards only righteous judgment.

His throne was filled by the saintly Edward, when only a child of nine years; and the lord protector, Seymour, and archbishop Cranmer governed England in his name. The protestant exiles returned to their country; and some celebrated foreign divines, as Peter Martyr, Bucer, Fagius and Ochinus, were

invited to take professorships in the English universities. The king's injunctions were published, ordering every parish to procure an English Bible, and every clergyman to provide himself with a New Testament in Latin and English, with the paraphrase of Erasmus.

Preachers were appointed to make circuits through the kingdom, to expound the Scriptures, and proclaim the Gospel truths. An English liturgy was framed, containing a large portion of the Scriptures; and a new book of homilies was published; whence is supposed to have originated the custom of *reading*, instead of preaching sermons; a custom peculiar to England, of all the European nations. In the Christian Observer for 1804, the respective advantages and disadvantages of extempore preaching and sermon-reading are ably and judiciously examined and balanced.

The English reformers had been bred in too persecuting a school to understand the nature of Christian toleration and charity; duties which *popery* has always laboured to exterminate from among men, by fire and sword. The use of the book of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments, although never laid before the convocation, and opposed by the popish bishops, was enforced by severe pains and penalties. This book was considered by some eminent protestant divines, to retain too much of the popish odour; and the papists themselves were persecuted for objecting to it, as setting forth new and heretical opinions.

The great body of the people, who had been systematically kept down in mental darkness, in full accordance with the popish maxim, that *ignorance* is the mother of devotion, were exceedingly attached to the wakes, processions and holidays, prescribed by the common prayer book; and the Romish priests inflamed them by their pulpit effusions, and incited them to arms. In Devonshire and Norfolk the rab-

ble raised an insurrection, to compel the government to prohibit the use of the English Bible, and prayer-book, and the sacramental cup.

Latimer and Hooper laboured incessantly to preach the gospel throughout their benighted country, but the great majority of the English hierarchy were woefully remiss in their duty; since it was necessary to issue an order, requiring the bishops to preach at least *four* times a year. An order, nearly, as necessary to stimulate the zeal of the present race of *unpreaching* bishops in England, as it was, during the reign of the sixth Edward.

So little was the real spirit of Christianity understood by the English reformers, that they actually silenced Hooper, the most able, the most laborious, and the most popular preacher among them all, because he declined wearing the popish vestments; nor was he consecrated a bishop until he submitted. Thus early did persecution lay the basis of *separation* from the church of England.

At the commencement of the reformation, those who wished to render the English church still farther removed from the secular spirit, and the cumbersome ceremonials of popery, than the protestant leaders thought necessary, were stigmatized as *puritans*; and driven out of the establishment. After the act of uniformity was passed by Charles the second, such men were called nonconformists; and when the toleration act was established, under William of Orange, they were denominated dissenters. These names were originally used as terms of reproach; for persecution, invariably, adds calumny to cruelty. During the first ages of our era, *Christianity* was the emphatic term of reproach, and furnished to the pagan persecutor a sufficient substitute for evidence, and argument, and eloquence, and wit. When church and state had formed an inseparable alliance, and an irreligious world assumed the name of Christian, the persecutors of evangelical piety honoured the faithful servants of their

Redeemer with the various appellations of Lollard, puritan, pietist, gospeller, methodist, swaddler, Calvinist, and so forth.

The English reformers seemed to think that the aid of the secular arm was necessary, to enable them to propagate protestantism. Accordingly, a royal commission was granted, to search out all anabaptists, heretics, and other contemners of the new liturgy. Among others found guilty, was Joan Boucher, or Joan of Kent, for heretical notions concerning the Incarnation; and as she refused to alter her opinions, Cranmer condemned her to the flames. But Edward, who appears to have had clearer views of Christian truth and charity than his clerical advisers, when pressed by the archbishop to sign the warrant for burning this woman alive, cried out, "What, will you send her quick to the devil?" And when, at length, he reluctantly yielded to Cranmer's solicitations, he burst into tears, and protested, that his tutor should answer for it before God; as, in obedience to him, he submitted, contrary to his own inclination.

The anabaptists, now called baptists, were persecuted by all the primitive protestants. Luther opened against them, with his wonted vehemence and ability; and other reformers followed his example. And when the baptists were found proof against argument, the protestants employed the popish method of reasoning; and called for the exterminating aid of the secular sword.

Some of these unfortunate people, having escaped from the flames on the European continent, fled to England; hoping for safety there, in consequence of Henry's quarrel with the pope. But in 1535, Henry burned alive fourteen Hollanders, on an accusation of anabaptism; and ten more escaped a similar death by a timely recantation. In 1539, thirty persons were banished at one time, for opposing infant baptism. They fled to Delft, in Holland, then under the yoke of the Emperor Charles, who beheaded the men, and drowned the women; as became a

true son, and a stanch supporter of the Roman superstition.

During the reign of Edward the sixth, Cranmer was at the head of that protestant inquisition, which was first to attempt the conversion of anabaptists, by dint of argument; failing which, the flames of death were to conclude their Christian efforts.

Edward died in 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign. Bishop Burnet, in his history of the reformation, says—the untimely end of this good prince was looked upon, by all people, as a just *judgment* of God, upon those who pretended to love and promote, but whose impious and flagitious lives were a reproach to a reformation. The open lewdness in which many lived, without shame or remorse, gave great occasion to their adversaries to say, they were in the right to assert justification by faith, without works, since they were, as to every good work, reprobate. Their gross and insatiable scrambling after the goods and wealth that had been dedicated to good designs, though to superstitious uses, without applying *any* part of it to the promoting the Gospel, the instructing the youth, and relieving the poor, made all people conclude, that it was for *robbery*, and not for reformation, that their zeal made them so active.

Probably, had Edward lived, the English reformation would have been carried to a greater distance from the complicated machinery, and cumbrous pomp of popery, and approximated nearer to the clerical simplicity of primitive Christianity. Certainly, after the death of this truly evangelical monarch, the reformation of the established church was *retrograde*; as well, under the successors of Mary, as during the reign of that horrible woman herself.

It does not appear, that the conversion, or spiritual regeneration of the English people was very extensive. Some of the leading men, both clerical and lay, were in earnest in their reformation from popery; as was manifested in their soon after yielding up

their living bodies to be burned, rather than renounce their faith, and declare their belief in a satanic lie. But to the great body of the people, it was little more than a change of political system, from one state church to another. An immense majority of all ranks, both clergy and laity, were either papists or protestants, Calvinists or Lutherans, high or low churchmen, as the existing government measured out to them their legal allowance of established faith and practice. In many parishes, the clergy could not, in others, they would not, preach; in most of them, they were papists at heart, and yet, conscientiously, retained their benefices under a protestant establishment.

Under the bloody Mary, the leading English reformers evidenced their faith to be of the right kind, however much they erred, while possessing power, in persecuting those, who differed from them in doctrine, discipline, or dress. When Cranmer, Latimer, Hooper, Ridley, and others, ever to be revered martyrs, passed through the flames to heaven, the burning of their bodies did, indeed, kindle a light, which, by the grace of God, none of the enemies of pure, evangelical, vital religion, have been able to extinguish.

The number of protestant martyrs, during Mary's reign, is computed at two hundred and eighty; including *twenty-six* clergymen, of whom five were bishops. It ought not to excite surprise, that so *few* clergy suffered; for a national, established, state clergy, as such, are seldom ambitious of martyrdom. The greater part of them must, always, *ex necessitate rei*, be irreligious, secular formalists; to whom the ruling power, and the prevailing religion, can never fail to present the charms of orthodoxy.

Even at this hour, when nearly three centuries have rolled by their tide of time since the commencement of the Reformation, a very fearful majority of the clergy in the Anglican Church establishment are merely formal; and not contented with never preach-

ing the Gospel themselves, invariably, to the extent of their capacity and power, persecute the comparatively few among their clerical brethren, who conscientiously perform the duties of their sacred function. These evangelical ministers are continually reproached, as being "methodists, calvinists, vital godliness men, righteous over much, sectaries in disguise;" and I know not what else.

Every effort is made by the formal faction to prevent such men from obtaining holy orders; to starve them when ordained; and to hold them up to the execration of an irreligious community, by every species of misrepresentation and abuse. The labours of Tomline, Marsh, Daubeny, and many others, are notable instances of the unjustifiable lengths, to which a controversial and a party spirit will carry even regular ministers of the Christian sanctuary.

These men, however, understand their business; and seem to be well aware of the force of the reply made by the arch calumniator, in Alexander's court, to the question, "why do you perpetually calumniate men whom you know to be honest, since such calumny must be harmless, as to them, and recoil upon your own head?" His answer was, "calumny, *continually repeated*, is like a deep wound; the wound itself may be healed, but there always remains behind a scar."

These tactics are in general requisition against beneficed evangelicals; for curates of the same stamp formal dignitaries have recourse to a much more compendious method. They suspend them from preaching; and thus, so far as they are able, consign them to penury and famine. To evangelical curates, located in the diocese of a formalist bishop, might be applied that fine, though brief description of peril, originally used in relation to wretches gulphed in another kind of danger; *υπερ εκ θανατου φερονται*; they float for ever on the verge of death.

Formalists, in these United States, labour with the same zeal and perseverance, in railing against evan-

gelism, as do their brethren in England. For a formalist, whether clerical or lay, is the same irreligious being all over the world; and is actuated by the same deadly hatred of all Christian truth; the carnal mind, the unregenerate heart, being for ever at enmity with God. But where there is *no* national church establishment, a formalist has *not* equal power to do mischief; is not so strong to extinguish all vital piety; seeing that his formalism, in due time, only dilutes and diminishes his own sect, and helps to swell the ranks of evangelical denominations, by driving all serious persons to them.

For, wherever religion is left to find its own level, without the interference of the secular government, to buttress up one persuasion and crush the rest, formalism has no competency to cope with Christianity.

It is manifest to an observant eye, says a late able writer, that there is a deep-rooted enmity in all wicked men, whether pagans, papists, protestants or deists, towards all godly men, of every nation and name. This enmity, it is true, is *not* suffered to operate according to its native tendency. He who holdeth the winds in his hand, restrains it. Men are withheld by laws, by policy, by interests, by education, by respect, by regard founded on *other* than religious qualities, and by various other things. There are certain conjunctions of interest, especially, which occasionally require a temporary cessation of hostilities; and it may seem, on such occasions, as if wicked men were ashamed of their animosities, and were all on a sudden become friendly to the followers of Christ.

Thus, at the Revolution in 1688, those who for more than twenty years had persecuted the nonconformists with unrelenting severity, when they found themselves in danger of being deprived of their dignities and emoluments by a popish prince, courted their friendship, and promised to persecute them no more. And thus, at the commencement of the French revolution, deists, papists and protestants, who were

engaged in one political cause, seemed to have forgotten their resentments; all amicably uniting together in opening a place for protestant worship.

But let not the servants of Christ imagine, that any temporary conjunction of interests will extinguish the ancient enmity. It may seem to be so for a time; and all things being under the control of Providence, such a time may be designed as a season of respite for the faithful; but when self-interest hath gained its end, if other worldly considerations do not interpose, things will return to their former channel. The enmity is not dead, but sleepeth.

On the death of Mary, her sister Elizabeth declared herself a protestant; but dictated the extent and mode of the English reformation. In the beginning of the year 1559, she restored the reading of Edward's liturgy, with the Epistles and Gospel, in English. By act of parliament, she took that supremacy in the church of England, which her father had borrowed from the pope. By this statute she was empowered to erect a court, which, under the name of the *High Commission*, has deeply stained the annals of England.

In this court, commissioners, appointed by the crown, took cognizance of, proscribed and punished the religion of Englishmen. It was in this court that archbishop Laud, whose name it is an effort of Christian forbearance to mention without an epithet of execration, afterwards laid the foundation of the overthrow of the English monarchy and hierarchy, by his bloody brutality, and persecution of all evangelical piety and truth.

By this statute, all clerical persons were obliged to swear to Elizabeth's supremacy; and although the great body of the national, the established clergy, had been devout papists under Mary, only two hundred and forty-three were honest enough to abandon their state benefices, rather than perjure themselves. The rest, to the amount of some thousands, swore themselves into substantial protestant livings.

The reformed themselves now began to exhibit a diversity of sentiments. Some exiles from England, during Mary's reign, had formed a church at Frankfort; where they laid aside the surplice, omitted the responses of the English liturgy, and chose John Knox for their pastor. On the arrival of other English refugees, one of them, Dr. Cox, who had been tutor to king Edward, and had aided in compiling the liturgy, insisted upon answering aloud after the minister. Hence arose a division; Knox and his party were driven from Frankfort; and Cox and his adherents soon disagreed among themselves.

This schism did not abate on their return to England, upon the accession of Elizabeth. Edward's liturgy was revised, and on the 24th of June, 1559, established by law, under an "act for the uniformity of common prayer;" which statute, also, empowered the queen to ordain further ceremonies and rites. This law, cruelly enforced, convulsed the church of England, for nearly a century; covered her with the blood of those whom it murdered; and increased the number of those very dissenters whom it laboured to exterminate by the sword of persecution.

In the church thus established, many of its clergy were grieved, that Elizabeth had restored the surplice, cope, and other popish vestments, which Edward had put away. These men, who wished to see the English church rendered still more pure from the relics of the Roman superstition, were called *puritans*; and as such, fell under the censure and scourge of the secular head of the church; who published certain "*injunctions*," ordaining, among other matters, that priests and deacons do not marry, without leave of their bishop and two justices of the peace; that bishops do not wed without allowance of their metropolitan, and the queen's commissioners; and that none keep abused images or pictures in their houses.

So great an advocate for liberty of conscience, and liberty of action, was this spinster queen, who

discouraged private and family prayers, that all worship might be performed within the consecrated walls of her churches.

The convocation sate in 1562, to consider the propriety of *further* reforming the establishment; but nothing was done, and the puritans presumed to officiate without the appointed habits. For this contumacy, the London clergy were summoned to appear before the ecclesiastical commission. The bishop's chancellor addressed them thus:—"My masters, and ye ministers of London, the council's pleasure is, that ye strictly keep the unity of apparel, like this man, (pointing to Mr. Cole, in full dress,) with a square cap, a scholar's gown, priest like, a tippet, and in the church, a linen surplice. Ye that will submit, write *volo*; those who will not, write *nolo*."

On attempting to speak, they were commanded to hold their peace; and while sixty-one, out of a hundred, reluctantly subscribed, thirty-seven preferred starving. They gave in a paper, containing their reasons; which is preserved by Neale, in his history of the puritans.

Archbishop Parker, and the ecclesiastical commission, caused every one who had the cure of souls, to swear obedience to *all* the queen's injunctions; to *all* the letters from the lords of the privy council; to the injunctions of the metropolitans; to the mandates of their bishop, archdeacons, chancellors, somners, and receivers, and to be subject to the control of *all* their superiors, with patience.

By such secular interference, the established church was well nigh cleansed of conscientious clergymen. A fourth part of the ministers were *suspended*, and silenced, as puritans. Among these, were the principal preachers in the nation; at a time, too, when not one in ten of the state clergy possessed sufficient talents and learning, to say nothing of their piety, to compose a very ordinary, and a very dull sermon. Many of the churches, especially in London, were shut up; and often, when the congregation

was assembled, the minister was forbidden to preach by the bishop's runners, sent to see that the clergy dressed like Mr. Cole, tippet wise, and with a square cap.

This pitiful persecution, so alien from the spirit of a wise and good government, and so directly tending to stop the progress of religion, roused the hatred of the people against the popish habits and ceremonies, enjoined by Elizabeth; and they demolished crucifixes, monuments, and painted windows; insulting the regular priests, too many of whom carried under their conformity clothes, the flagrant characteristics of ignorance and vice. Some of the ultra, highflying bishops complained to the court, that *they*, poor, injured innocents! were persecuted, and afraid to stir abroad, lest the populace might stone them.

Others, however, more especially Dr. Grindall, bishop of London, disapproved of the unchristian spirit and conduct of the government clergy; and was as kind to the puritans, as such intolerant times would allow. The university of Cambridge, also, exercised its privilege of authorizing ministers to preach throughout England, without a bishop's license. Hence, many of the suspended clergy travelled through the country, preaching the Gospel, wherever they could find a pulpit.

About the year 1567, arose the sect of the Brownists, or independents, who not only denied the *jus divinum* of episcopacy, but maintained that the English establishment itself was *not* a true Scriptural church. In order to convince these heretics of their error, Elizabeth had recourse to her favourite arguments of imprisonment, torture, and death.

She also *burned alive* some Dutch anabaptists; notwithstanding Fox, the martyrologist, wrote her a letter, containing some dissuasives from this horrible act, as must have softened any human heart, except that of a thorough bred, established formalist, armed with power to wreak its natural vengeance upon evan-

gelical piety. Fox's letter might be read with profit, by many sturdy polemics and persecutors of the present day, in the Anglican Church establishment.

Towards the puritans, also, her cruelty was augmented; both parties pelted each other with abusive pamphlets. Elizabeth's officers searched strictly after the private presses of the puritans; and the severest laws were passed against the general liberty of the press; yet the cruelty of the state bishops outran the zeal of their royal mistress, and passed beyond the limits, even of the most iniquitous statutes. At length, several puritans were *executed* by order of this protestant queen. One grievous item in the catalogue of their crimes, was maintaining the morality of the Christian Sabbath; at a time, when several lives were lost at a *bear baiting*, on the Lord's day, in the neighbourhood of London.

In the thirty-fifth year of her reign, Elizabeth enacted a statute for the punishment of those who refused to go to the state church. For the first offence, an imprisonment of three months is inflicted; for the second, banishment; for the third, *death*. This act, I believe, has never yet been formally repealed.

The condition of real religion, of vital Christianity, was, of course, *not* very flourishing amidst all these contentions, persecutions, and butcheries, about vestments, habits, rites, ceremonies, and church government. The great body of the national clergy, notwithstanding the *necessary* tendency of a church establishment to promote piety, and prevent paganism; were, indeed, a most pitiable set of faithless hirelings; in ten thousand parishes there were only a few hundred preachers. A petition, presented to parliament, complained, that to fill up the places of the ejected puritans, the bishops manufactured state clergy out of the basest of the people; not only as to their occupations, they being shoemakers, barbers, shepherds, and horse-keepers; but also, on account of their vices. In a survey of different counties, a

large proportion of the established clergy are marked as drunkards, dicers, and burned in the hand for felony.

Bishop Sandys says, that many people could not hear a sermon for seven years; and while they perished for lack of knowledge, their blood would lie at somebody's door. Yet amidst this famine of the word of life, Elizabeth prohibited the prophesyings, or preachings of the clergy; for the continuance of which archbishop Grindall pleaded in vain, to the loss of his own favour with the queen, who proscribed all as puritans, that went to a place of public worship *twice* on the Sabbath, and employed the evening of that day in domestic worship and instruction.

With the character of Elizabeth, as a *politician*, the present inquiry has no concern. Doubtless, she had a strong, clear head, and possessed a sufficient fund of good sense, to select able ministers, particularly, Walsingham, and the two Cecils, father and son, whose genius and wisdom bore England up to a high eminence among the sovereignties of Europe; but of her *personal piety* her own conduct must create doubts in the mind of an impartial observer. She shed too much Christian blood; was too deliberate, too cold blooded, too cruel a persecutor, for a religious woman.

Her profession of protestantism was little else than her own usurpation of papal authority. She kept images, a crucifix, and lighted candles, in her chapel, and ordered her chaplain to desist from ungodly digression, when he preached against the superstitious abuse of the sign of the cross. She seemed, like her father, to endeavour to suspend the religion of England upon her own arbitrary will, and ever shifting caprice. She spent a long reign in endeavouring to exterminate evangelism from the clergy and people; and died, without exhibiting a single beam of religious triumph or consolation. But we leave her, with her sister Mary, to the judgment of that tribunal which cannot err.

The next sanctimonious defender of our most holy faith, was James, the sixth of Scotland, and the first of England. The reformation, in Scotland, was popular and parliamentary; and James had an early opportunity of exhibiting his *kingcraft*, on which he so much prided himself; that is, of denying or disguising the truth. The faction of his mother, who was in the safe keeping of her cousin Elizabeth, was composed of professed papists, and persons indifferent to all religion. The rest of the Scottish were zealous for the reformation, and abhorred Mary.

While the house of Guise was plotting to usurp the crown of France, and to embroil England with Scotland, James leaned to the popish interest; but when the duke of Guise was killed at Blois, and Henry the third soon after murdered, and Henry the fourth became king of France, our Scottish Solomon fell into the leading strings of Elizabeth's ministers. But no party could ever trust him. He wrote a letter to the pope, promising to favour the papists; and when cardinal Bellarmine published this letter, after the gunpowder plot trials, one of his creatures, Balmerinoch, took it upon himself, saying, that he obtained the king's signature to it, without the king's knowing its contents.

This tale no one believed, because Balmerinoch was never punished. James was always suspected of leaning towards popery, notwithstanding his miserable effusions in theology, and calling the pope antichrist. Yet, while he was making overtures to the popish party, he plotted successfully with the elder Cecil, and other leading men in England, to secure Elizabeth's protestant throne at her demise.

As soon as he ascended the English throne, he discovered his hatred to the Scottish kirk, and laboured to establish episcopacy in its stead. But these transactions will be considered hereafter, when the church of Scotland comes under discussion.

Yet this same James had said to the Scottish presbyterians—"I thank God, that I am king of the sin-

cerest kirk in the world ; sincerer than the kirk of England, whose service is an ill-said mass in English ; it wants nothing of the mass but the liftings ;" that is, the elevation of the host.

From the discovery of the gunpowder plot to his dying day, he was always talking and writing against, but acting in favour of popery. But for *protestantism*, this supreme head of the English church could never be induced to exert himself ; not even, when his own son-in-law, the husband of his only daughter, the elector palatine, most needed his assistance ; although the English nation was much inclined to support him ; and the struggles of Bohemia against the horrors of popery, at that time, offered a more favourable opportunity than had ever occurred, of establishing the reformation in Europe.

Bishop Burnet, in his history of his own time, says, that James's reign in England was a continued course of mean practices. The first condemnation of sir Walter Raleigh was very black ; but the executing him, after so many years, and after an employment given him, was a barbarous sacrifice of him to the Spaniards. The rise and fall of Somerset, and the rapid greatness of Buckingham, exposed him to all the world. His letters to his son Charles and Buckingham, while in Spain, exhibit the most despicable meanness. He disgraced England in the eyes of all Europe, by his folly, cowardice, and fraud ; and while hungry writers flattered him, as another Solomon, at home, he was despised by all abroad, as a pedant, devoid of judgment, courage, and steadiness ; subject to his favourites and minions ; and delivered over to the corruptions of Spain.

But James's character, as a politician, belongs to the writers of civil history ; our present concern with him relates merely to his church supremacy, and his conduct in that capacity. On his entrance into England, the puritans, who expected at least an abstinence from persecution, in a king who had thanked God for being at

the head of the sincerest kirk in the world, met him by the way, and presented him a petition called the Millenary, conveying the wishes of a *thousand* ministers for further reformation.

The universities, on the other side, sent forth their reply, accompanied with a decree. James appointed a conference at Hampton-court; and named eight bishops and eight deans, on the part of the state church; and four men on the side of the puritans. But James, instead of hearing the arguments on either side, was eager to exhibit his own theological prowess, and babbled incessantly about the points in controversy; at which his bishops were so mightily enraptured, as to declare, that for learning and piety, he was the Solomon of his age. Bancroft, bishop of London, fell on his two knees, and said, "my heart melteth for joy, that Almighty God, of his singular mercy, has given us such a king, as since Christ's time the like hath not been." The archbishop of Canterbury, also, exclaimed, "undoubtedly, your majesty speaks by the special assistance of the Spirit of God."

This beggarly blasphemy James was weak and wicked enough to swallow entire: and, in order to show by *what* spirit he was assisted, he ended the conference, by declaring, that *he* would make the puritans conform; or harry them out of the land, or do worse. Doubtless, making Christians by act of parliament and persecution, was the only Scriptural mode of spiritual conversion, ever acknowledged or practised by those legitimate heads of the established church of England, the Stuarts.

Soon after the close of the Hampton-court conference, the convocation met, and published one hundred and forty-one canons, which were ratified by the letters patent of the king, as head of the church; but *not* being sanctioned by parliament, they bind only the state clergy.

Bancroft, now archbishop of Canterbury, persecuted

the puritans with such effect, that in one year three hundred ministers were suspended, deprived, excommunicated, imprisoned, or driven into exile.

In order still farther to show by *what* spirit he was influenced, James, in strict accordance with the lax notions of popery in relation to the Christian Sabbath, published a declaration encouraging *sports* on the Lord's day; the morality of which day, be it remembered, is insisted upon in the articles of that very established church, whose supreme head he was. Bishop Moreton drew up this declaration for Sunday sports; in which the good people of England were recommended to keep the Sabbath day holy unto the Lord, by dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May games, whitsun-ales, morris-dances, setting up May-poles, and carrying rushes into the churches.

As James's inclinations always gravitated towards popery; and as the greater part of the state clergy still professed what is now called Calvinism, but which, long before Calvin's birth, was known in the Christian church as Augustinism; and as the puritans were no great admirers of the man of sin; the royal Solomon, notwithstanding he had sent some English divines to the synod of Dort, began to encourage what is called Arminianism, although it no more resembles the theological system of James Van Armin, than it does that of John Calvin. To effect this scheme, he raised William Laud to the episcopal bench.

The established clergy, however, whose religious and political opinions generally coincide with those of the royal court, seemed inclined to submit to all the king's extravagant notions of absolute and uncontrolled sovereignty; for when a preacher at Oxford asserted in his sermon the right of the people to resist a tyrant, that university passed a decree, "that it is *not* lawful for subjects to appear in arms against their king, on the score of religion, or on *any other* account;" and all the graduates were obliged to swear

that they would always continue of the same opinion.

At this period, it must be confessed, the religion and liberty of England were in safe custody, under the auspices of the legal head of the established church; possessing, in the words of the second canon, "the same authority in causes ecclesiastical that the godly (and *ungodly*) kings had amongst the Jews, and Christian emperors of the primitive church."

James, while secretly cherishing popery, in contradiction to his most solemn protestations to parliament; while openly favouring Arminianism, in opposition to his own training and declaration in the sincerest kirk in the world; evidenced his Christian spirit, by *burning alive* an Arian; and soon after consigning another to the flames. He was preparing to burn a third, when he found that this too close imitation of Henry and Mary, the two most execrable of all the Tudors, had roused the public indignation; and the victim of royal polemics was permitted to perish in perpetual imprisonment.

At the death of Bancroft, Abbot was made archbishop of Canterbury; and endeavoured to heal the deep gashes of the nation, by showing kindness to the puritans; by forbidding his clergy to read the declaration for Sunday sports; and by opposing the semi-pelagian, semi-popish theology of Laud.

One main object of James, and Laud, and Charles, steadily pursued throughout the remainder of James's and during the whole of his son's reign, was to exterminate whatever they saw fit to brand with the title of *puritanism*; in which scheme they succeeded so well as to work the temporary destruction, both of the monarchy and of the hierarchy of England. Laud taught both his royal masters to stigmatize, as puritans, not only the nonconformists, but, likewise, all those in the establishment who still continued to construe the state church articles in a Calvinistic sense, the sense put upon them by the reformers themselves, and by the great body of their successors,

for nearly a century; and also, all those who opposed the arbitrary measures of an unprincipled and cruel court.

The independent country gentlemen of England received the persecuted puritans in their houses, as tutors to their children; whence was formed a generation of Englishmen, well imbued with the spirit of hostility to all tyranny, both civil and religious. Some of the puritans, who escaped the fangs of James, and Bancroft, and Laud, brought hither, to America, their sentiments and principles; which, however, in relation to religious matters, time and circumstance have very materially diluted, in certain sections of the United States.

Charles the first inherited all his father's notions about the plenitude of kingly dominion; but substituted for the light, trifling, undignified manner of James, a solemn gravity, better suited to his own reserved and haughty temper. He was seldom even barely civil in his exterior deportment, and generally bestowed a favour so ungraciously, as to couple with it the sting of mortification.

His very first act as a king in Scotland, gave evil augury of his future reign. In 1633, he went down, in person, to be crowned; his entry and coronation were so magnificent, as nearly to ruin the already impoverished country by the expense. When the parliament sat, the lords of the articles prepared an act, declaring the royal prerogative, similar to that passed in 1606, but adding an act passed in 1609, which empowered James to prescribe apparel to churchmen, with their own consent. And in 1617, the lords of articles prepared an act, that *all* ecclesiastical affairs should be determined by the king, with the consent of a competent number of clergy, and have the power of a law. This act, however, though passed in the articles, was suppressed in the house by order of James himself.

The act of 1633 embraced both those of 1606 and 1609. This the earl of Rothes opposed, and desired

the two acts might be divided; but Charles said, it was now one act, and he must either vote for or against it. Rothes answered, that the addition was contrary to the liberties of the church, and ought not to be made without the consent of the clergy, or, at least, their being heard. Charles ordered him to argue no more, but give his vote; which he did, *not* content. Some few other lords offered to argue, but Charles *stopped* them, and commanded them to vote.

Almost the whole commons voted in the negative, and the act was *rejected* by a majority; which Charles *knew*, for he had called for a list of the members, and with his own pen marked every man's vote. The clerk of the Register, who gathers and declares the votes, said, the act was carried in the *affirmative*; but Rothes declared it went in the negative; whereon, Charles said the clerk's declaration must stand, unless Rothes would go to the bar, and accuse him of falsifying the records of parliament, which was *capital*; but if he failed in proof, he was liable to the same punishment.

This Rothes declined; and the act was published as a law, though rejected by the house. Charles, also, expressed his high displeasure against all who had opposed the bill. The lords had many meetings thereon, and concluded that all their liberties were gone, and parliament a piece of pageantry, if the clerk of register might declare, as he pleased, how the vote went, and no scrutiny be allowed.

It is not necessary to expatiate minutely on the merciless cruelty of Laud towards all who refused to bow down to the idols which he had set up. Yet it would not be amiss occasionally to remind those, both in England and in these United States, who worship the memory of that "great prelate," as they term him, scarcely on this side of idolatry, of his star-chamber exploits; the imprisonments, fines, pilloryings, mutilations, burnings, which he inflicted upon those, who preferred to worship God, in conscientious simplicity and purity, to a hypocritical compli-

ance with his base mummeries and pagan ceremonials; the cold-blooded, malignant delight with which he entered into his private diary, that on such a day, at such an hour, some one was branded in the cheek with a hot iron; or had his nose slit open; or his ears pared off close to his skull; or had been lashed, until the naked bones stood out visibly on his mangled back.

And all these horrible mutilations and manglings of his fellow-men, by a bishop of the English protestant church establishment! For what? Because they were too honest, too conscientious, too intrepid, to subscribe to all his beggarly popish ceremonials and mummeries; as the established, formal substitute for the worship of that Jehovah, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and transgression, and sin.

Mosheim, and his translator and annotator, between them, inform us, that in 1625 died James the first of England, the bitterest enemy of the doctrine and discipline of the puritans, to which in his youth he had professed the warmest attachment; the most inflexible and eager patron of the Arminians, to whose ruin and condemnation, in Holland, he had been singularly instrumental; and the most zealous defender of episcopal government, against which he had been accustomed to express himself in the strongest terms.

His son Charles had imbibed all his father's worst political and religious prejudices. All his zeal and exertion were directed to extend the royal prerogative, and raise the power of the crown above the authority of law; to reduce *all* the churches in the British isles under the jurisdiction of state bishops; and to suppress the opinions and institutions of Calvinism.

The execution of this threefold scheme he committed to Laud, whom, in 1633, he raised to the see of Canterbury. It is worthy of observation, that Laud was the *first* Arminian prelate who occupied the palace of Lambeth. There had been six protestant Metropolitans of England, from the com-

mencement of the Reformation to the ascendancy of Laud; namely, Cranmer, Parker, Grindall, Whitgift, Bancroft and Abbot; all of whom professed to hold the tenets generally called Calvinistic.

On his accession to the English throne, Charles was supposed to be favourably inclined towards the puritans; for his tutor and all his court leaned to that side; and Dr. Preston, the puritan leader, rode up in the coach from Theobalds to London, with the king and the duke of Buckingham. But what puritanism could be expected in a man who married a seducing papist, whose entrance into England, bishop Kennet declared to be more fatal than the plague? It were as easy to amalgamate darkness with light, as to reconcile popery with puritanism, or with any thing approaching to puritanism.

For openly exhibiting Laud's new system of Arminian theology, Montague was formally censured by the English parliament, and done into a bishop by Charles. Laud's own conduct was sufficient to ruin any church, however pure and apostolic in doctrine and worship; and to destroy a much better king than Charles; and to overthrow a much better government than England ever knew, prior to the revolution of 1688. This semi-papist was continually urging Charles to the commission of illegal, arbitrary, cruel acts. Many puritans were fined in the star-chamber, so excessively, as to sink them from affluence to beggary.

Preachers were employed to set forth the *divine* right of an arbitrary, evasive king. One Dr. Sibthorpe declared, in an assize sermon, that if princes command what subjects may not perform, because against the laws of God, or nature, or impossible; subjects are bound to undergo the punishment, *without* resistance or reviling.

Charles, of course, was delighted with such an evangelical exhibition of Scriptural truth, and ordered archbishop Abbot to license it for the press; but as Abbot understood his Bible in a sense quite dif-

ferent from that in which it appeared to the eyes and the understandings of Sibthorpe, Charles and Laud, he declined obedience to the royal mandate; and was forthwith banished to an unhealthy spot; doubtless to enable him the better to meditate upon the uncertainty of human life.

Charles, in imitation of his father, and by the advice of Laud, published a declaration, encouraging his subjects to enliven the Sabbath by dancing, masks and interludes. And when the judges and justices of one of the largest counties in England remonstrated against this profanation of the Lord's day, Laud reviled them as puritans; and, remembering that he belonged to the church militant here on earth, collared and shook chief justice Richardson so fiercely, and so perseveringly, as nearly to choke the aged lawyer with his lawn sleeves.

The Lord's Supper used to be celebrated in the midst of the churches, at a table; which Laud removed, placed as an altar against the east wall, and fenced round with a railing. The people were instructed to bow towards this new altar, and to look upon it as a place peculiarly and intrinsically sacred.

The pompous ritual of the established Anglican Church was approximated to that of Rome, and Dr. Cozens set up in the cathedral at Durham, a marble altar with cherubim; a cope, with the Trinity, God the Father being represented as an old man; and a crucifix, with the image of Christ, having a red beard and a blue cap. He lighted up two hundred tapers at the altar on candlemas day; and procured a *consecrated* knife to cut the sacramental bread.

Laud punished without measure, and without mercy, all who presumed to disapprove of his ecclesiastical system. Mr. Smart, a prebendary of Durham cathedral, was cruelly persecuted for preaching against its popish rites. And Dr. Leighton, father of the excellent Scottish archbishop of that name, was tried in the star-chamber, for publishing *Zion's Plea* against Prelacy; and received a sentence, for which Laud pulled

off his cap, in presence of the assembled court, and gave thanks to God aloud.

This precious primate of the established church of England has deliberately recorded in his diary this righteous sentence, which extorted his gratitude to a merciful God:—"his ears were cut off, his nose slit, his face branded with burning irons; he was tied to a post, and whipped with a treble cord, of which every lash brought away his flesh; he was kept in the pillory near two hours, in frost and snow."

Leighton was then imprisoned, with peculiar rigour, for eleven years, and when, at length, released, *not* by Laud, who never knew what relenting was, but by the English parliament, he could neither see, nor hear, nor walk.

In 1637, Burton, Prynne, and Bastwick, a divine, a lawyer, and a physician, were found guilty of writing against Laud's popish innovations, and the Sabbath sports; for which crime, they were condemned to stand in the pillory, and have both ears cut off. Prynne had heretofore received this Laudian benediction; and now, by especial order of the good archbishop himself, the remaining stumps of his ears were barbarously mangled, the temporal artery cut, and blood drained off in streams.

When Laud was afterwards on his own trial, he had the front to ask, what one instance of cruelty he had ever committed? Prynne immediately took off his wig, and showed these "*insignia Laudis*," upon his own bare, mutilated skull.

During twelve years of the maladministration of this merciless, bigoted formalist, *four thousand* emigrants escaped with life, from his murderous persecution, to America; and twenty-seven clergymen, ordained in the church of England, became pastors of American congregations, prior to the year 1640. These persecutions drained England of half a million sterling, a sum, at least, equal in value to ten millions of dollars at present; and also drove from her an immeasurable aggregate of piety, talent, learning, industry, and efficiency. So

serviceable is a persecuting church establishment to the cause of religion, and to the country upon which it is fastened by the iron chain of secular power.

Multitudes more would have followed the earlier pilgrims to these transatlantic shores; but Laud forbade them to emigrate, that he might gratify, though he could not glut his archiepiscopal malignity, in mangling and mutilating their bodies at home. Both Charles and Laud, however, afterwards enjoyed full leisure to regret the having issued their writ of *ne exeant regno*, to Oliver Cromwell, and some of his sturdy companions, who wished to come to this country.

No human language is sufficient to describe the imprudent insolence, the childish superstition, the extreme violence, the personal animosity, the unrelenting, blood-thirsty persecution, that marked, and characterized, and pervaded, and darkened the whole course of Laud's ecclesiastical administration. He executed the plans of the arbitrary Stuart, and furthered the views of *his own* clerical ambition, with singular cruelty, and unrivalled folly.

He did every thing *insolently*. If the law of the land opposed his schemes, he spurned it with contempt, and violated it without hesitation. He heaped upon all whom he chose to designate as puritans, every species of injury, and vexation, and suffering; and laboured to exterminate them by imprisonment, by torture, by murder.

He rejected publicly, so early as 1625, the first year of Charles's reign, the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination, as contained in the seventeenth article of the Anglican Church; and notwithstanding the opposition and remonstrance of archbishop Abbot, insisted upon substituting the Arminian system in its place. He did *not* indeed, venture openly to abrogate the thirty-nine articles, and cause the tenets of Arminius to be incorporated into the creed of the church of England; but in 1625, he wrote a

small treatise to prove the orthodoxy of the Arminian doctrines; and by his influence with the duke of Buckingham, he got Arminian and anti-puritanical chaplains placed about the king.

These facts are worthy of notice, as contrasted with his subsequent flat denial of having ever encouraged Arminianism; and should be, occasionally, remembered by those churchmen, on both sides of the Atlantic, who so much admire this father and founder of protestant episcopal *formalism*, and hang his picture up in their closets, as papists do the images of their patron saints.

On his trial, Laud utterly denied himself to be, either an Arminian, or a promoter of Arminianism—"I answer, in general," said this prevaricating prelate, "that I never endeavoured to introduce Arminianism into our church, nor ever maintained any Arminian opinions. I did neither protect, nor countenance the Arminians, persons, books, or tenets. True it is, I was, in a declaration of the commons house, taxed as a favourer, advancer of Arminians and their opinions, without any particular proof at all; which was a great *slander* to me."

Credat Judæus! for no Christian will be readily induced to believe this assertion, although made under the prospect of impending death; for he could not reasonably expect to escape with life from the hands of men, whom he had so long been in the habit of persecuting; so many of whose relations and friends he had fined, imprisoned, tortured, killed; and some of whom, then present, bore in their own persons, the indelible marks of his merciless mutilations.

Now for the proofs of the truth of his dying asseverations, that he never was an Arminian; that he never maintained any Arminian opinions; that he never countenanced Arminians; that he never introduced Arminianism into the church of England.

In 1622, Laud induced James to publish "*directions*," forbidding every clergyman, under the degree of bishop or dean, to preach in public, either for or

against those doctrines of grace specified therein. But this prohibition, causing much indignation in the public, James sent forth an apology for his conduct; which served both to allay the popular displeasure, and to blunt the edge of the directions themselves. In 1626, about four months after his coronation, Charles, instigated by Laud, revived these unpopular directions, and extended the prohibition to bishops and deans.

There was *fraud* as well as force, throughout the whole of this proceeding. But *dolus, an virtus?* is the motto of a full fledged formalist. And in justice, we must confess, that the *dolus* generally outweighs the *virtus*, in his ecclesiastical measures and conduct; formalism being as nearly allied to Jesuitism, in its convenient morality, or, to use a softer term, *management*; as it is akin in its semipelagian doctrine.

The literal tenor of Charles's proclamation was more favourable to the Calvinists, than to the Arminians; but by the manner of Laud's interpretation and execution thereof, it was made to exalt the Arminians, and crush the Calvinists. In this proclamation, it was expressly declared—"that his majesty would admit of *no innovations* in the doctrine, discipline, or government of the church, and therefore charges all his subjects, and especially the clergy, *not* to publish or maintain, in preaching or writing, any *new* inventions or opinions, *contrary* to the said doctrine and discipline, established by law."

It was, to speak in the mildest terms, a singular instance of Laud's indecent partiality, to employ this proclamation in suppressing the books written *in defence* of the thirty-nine articles; while he caused the writings of the Arminians, who expressly *opposed* these articles, to be publicly licensed. This mode of conduct, on the part of Laud, not only demonstrates his own want of integrity, but also shows how difficult it is to change systems established by law. For neither Charles, who was by no means shy of usurping authority; nor Laud, who was far from being slow to

abuse it, attempted to reform or alter the articles of church faith, directly opposed to the Arminian scheme, which they were now promoting, and which was fast gaining ground among the state clergy, under their courtly protection.

Instead of reforming, or rather of counter-reforming the thirty-nine articles, which would have been strenuously opposed by the house of commons, and a large proportion of the national clergy and laity, who were still attached to Calvinism, as the accredited system of the English reformers; the cunning and malignant primate induced his royal puppet to reprint the articles, with an *ambiguous* declaration prefixed, tending to discourage the existing controversies between Calvinists and Arminians; and *thus* secure to the Arminians an unmolested state, in which their power and influence might daily grow, under the countenance and patronage of the court.

This declaration, which, in many editions of the English common prayer book, still stands at the head of the articles, is a curious piece of *political* theology. In its tenor, precision is studiously sacrificed to ambiguity; and even contradictions are preferred before clear, consistent, positive decisions. The declaration *seemed* to favour the Calvinists, by prohibiting the affixing any new sense to any article; but in effect favoured the Arminians, by ordering all curious research about the contested points to be laid aside. The most preposterous part of this declaration was, its being designed to favour the Arminians, and yet prohibiting any one, either in sermons or writings, to put *his own* sense or comment to be the meaning of the article; and ordering all to take each article in its *literal* and grammatical sense, and submit to it in the full and plain meaning thereof.

For the plain, literal, grammatical meaning of the *seventeenth* article, has been universally conceded to be unfavourable to the Arminian system; and bishop Burnet, himself a stout Arminian, acknowledges, in his "Exposition," that, without *enlarging* their sense,

Arminians cannot subscribe certain of the articles, consistently with their own opinions.

One immediate design of this proclamation was, to shelter Richard Montague, a clerical creature of Laud, from the printed refutations of his book, which were showering upon him from all quarters. He had written in behalf of the Arminian tenets, and of absolute obedience to kings; Arminianism, in that age, in England, closely connecting itself with civil, as well as ecclesiastical despotism. And these two systems of theology and tyranny, cemented by mutual interests and similar views, formed, under the auspices of Laud and Charles, that grand conspiracy against the doctrines of the church of England, and against the constitutional liberties of the English people; which soon eventuated in the overthrow of the hierarchy, and the decapitation of the monarch.

The parliament, about a year before, in 1625, had severely censured Montague's performance, entitled "An appeal to Cesar;" "in which," said the committee of the commons, "there are many things directly *contrary* to the thirty-nine articles established by parliament. He *denies* that Arminius was the first who infected Leyden with errors and schisms. The synod of Dort, so honoured by the late king, he calls foreign and partial. He plainly intimates, that there are puritan bishops; which, we conceive, tends much to the disturbance of the peace in church and state. He respects Bellarmin, but slights Calvin, Beza, Perkins, Whitaker, and Reynolds. He much discountenances God's word; disgraces lectures, lecturers, and preaching itself; nay, even reading the Bible. Upon the whole, the frame of the book is to encourage *popery*, in maintaining the papists to be the true church, and that they differ not from us in any fundamental point."

This description of Montague, by the house of commons, bears a striking resemblance to the opinions and character of the modern fashionable formalists,

who swarm in such abundance, throughout the Anglican Church establishment.

Heylin, in his life of Laud, admits, that Charles and his confessor had recourse to this proclamation, because they were afraid to trust the Arminian controversy to a convocation of the English clergy; the *majority* of whom, both bishops and inferior clerks, still adhered to the articles, in the sense in which the first reformers had framed them. He says that bishop Andrews did *not* incline to the *new* modelling the church from Calvinism to Arminianism; the Arminian tenets *not* being so generally entertained among the clergy; nor the archbishop Abbot, and the greater part of the prelates so inclinable to them, as to *venture* the determining of those points to a convocation. But that which was not thought fit, in that conjecture, for a convocation, *his majesty* was pleased to take order in, by his royal edict. Many books had been written against *Montague*, &c.

Some time after the issuing of this proclamation, or royal edict, Dr. Davenant, bishop of Salisbury, preached before the king, at Whitehall. His text, as he himself tells us, in his letter to Dr. Ward, on this occasion, was Rom. vi. 23,—the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Here, I expounded the threefold happiness of the Godly: 1st, happy in the Lord whom they serve; God, or Christ Jesus;—2d, happy in the reward of their service, eternal life;—3d, happy in the manner of their reward; *χαρισμα*, or *gratuitum donum in Christo*, the reward is God's free, unmerited gift in Christ.

The two former points were not excepted against. In the third, I considered eternal life in three divers instances:—1st, in the eternal destination thereunto, which we call election;—2d, in our conversion, regeneration, or manifestative justification, which I termed the embryo of eternal life;—3d, in our coronation, when full possession of eternal life is given us. In all these, I showed it to be *χαρισμα*, the *free gift* of

God, through Christ ; and *not* procured, or pr merited by any special acts, depending upon the free will of man. The second point, wherein I showed, that effectual vocation, or regeneration, whereby we have eternal life inchoated, and begun in us, is a free gift ; was not expressly taxed. Only the first bred offence ; *not* in regard to the doctrine itself, but because the king had *prohibited* the debating thereof.

Presently after my sermon was ended, it was signified unto me by my lord of York, archbishop Harsenet, my lord of Winchester, bishop Andrews, and my lord chamberlain, that his majesty was much displeased, that I had stirred this question, which he had forbidden to be meddled with, one way or other. My answer was, that I had delivered nothing but the *received* doctrine of our church, established in the seventeenth article ; and that I was ready to justify the truth of what I had then taught.

Their answer was, that the doctrine was *not* gainsayed ; but his highness had given command that these questions should not be debated ; and therefore he took it more offensively, that any one should be so bold, as in his own hearing, to break his royal commands. My reply was, that I never understood his majesty had forbid the handling of any doctrine, *comprised* in the articles of our church ; but only the raising of *new* questions, or adding of *new* sense thereunto, which I had not done, nor ever should do.

When coming to the Tuesday sermon, one of the clerks of the council told me, that I was to attend at the council table, the next day at two of the clock. When I came thither, my lord of York made a speech of well nigh half an hour long, aggravating the boldness of my offence ; namely, the breach of the king's declaration. Then I stood upon this defence, that the doctrine of predestination, which I taught, was *not* forbidden by the declaration ; *first*, because in the declaration, all the thirty-nine articles are established, amongst which the article of predestination is one. *Second*, because all ministers are urged to

subscribe unto the truth of this article; and all subjects to continue in possession of it, as well as the rest.

Upon these, and such like grounds, I gathered it, predestination could *not* be esteemed among forbidden, curious or needless doctrines. And here I desired, that out of *any* clause in the declaration it might be showed me, that, keeping myself within the bounds of the article, I had transgressed his majesty's command. But the declaration was *not* produced, nor any particular words in it.

Fuller observes, that bishop Davenant, on his entrance into the council chamber, presented himself before the board *on his knees*; a mortifying indignity, inflicted on him, doubtless, by the instigation of the malignant, vindictive Laud. And on his knees he might have remained, during the whole time of his continuance before the privy council, for any favour he found from those of *his own* function, his brother prelates, there present. But the *temporal* lords bid him arise, and stand to his own defence; being, as yet, only accused, not convicted.

Soon after, the king sent for Davenant, and told him, that *he*, Charles, would *not* have this high point, predestination, meddled withal, or debated, the one way or the other.

Mark, here, the hopeful proficiency of the royal pupil in Laud's school of *Jesuitism*. Charles professed to prohibit the *opposing*, no less than the asserting the doctrine of predestination. But his *mental reservation* helped him, in this as in other instances. He meant only half what he said. Davenant was summoned before the privy council, and reprimanded, for asserting the doctrine of predestination, according to the seventeenth article; while Montague was encouraged, and promoted to the episcopate, for opposing predestination; that is to say, for literally transgressing the king's ostensible injunction.

In addition to all these iniquities, Laud introduced into the Anglican Church numberless rites and cere-

monies, marked with the basest stain of superstition; forced bishops upon the Scottish people, who were zealously attached to the ecclesiastical polity and discipline of Geneva, generally called presbyterian, and had shown, on all occasions, a peculiar abhorrence of episcopal government; and above all, he gave many strong intimations, that he deemed the *popish* church more pure, more holy, and far preferable to those *protestant* churches, which decline submission to the dominion of bishops.

Now this is the very essence of that modern fashionable theology, which may be designated by the generic term, *formalism*, which, however it may assume various shades in different individuals, unites them all by one common bond, namely, the substitution of *churchmanship* for Christianity. And, if we may judge from the publications of some of the most distinguished formal champions of the English ecclesiastical establishment, they would rather embrace an apostle fresh from pandemonium, with the mark of churchmanship on his forehead, than the brightest archangel that ministers in heaven, without the surmounting of such an exterior symbol.

Nay, but the Rev. Samuel Wix, a clergyman of the church of England, and vicar of Bartholomew the Less, in London, has recently uttered a work, in which he gravely proposes a *union* between the Roman and Anglican Churches; for the *avowed* purpose of putting down all protestant dissenters, and of destroying the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Divers attempts, at divers times, have been made to whitewash Laud, and to transmute an established episcopal tyrant and murderer, into a church saint; after the manner of the papal scheme. One of the most zealous of his advocates is Dr. Heylin, who, in his "Life of Laud," and in his "History of the Quinquarticular Controversy," labours, at once to magnify the primate, and to induce his readers to believe, that the articles of the English Church are to be now, and always have been, construed in an Arminian sense.

Quite lately, Mr. Johnson Grant, in his "Summary of the history of the English Church, and of the sects which have separated from its communion," has trodden in Heylin's foot-track, so far as relates to glorifying Laud, and exhibiting the Arminianism of the Anglican Church, as exemplified in her articles, homilies and liturgy.

Indeed, Mr. Grant is so zealous a churchman, and so desperate a foe to all dissenters, that he actually wages a long and loud war against *Joanna Southcote*, an old woman in England, who, some time before she died, gave out that she was going *to lay an egg*.

His defence of Laud amounts to a laboured eulogy upon his "proud and haughty virtue;" his "towering spirit;" his "eager and unrelenting zeal against separatists;" and so forth. Qualities these, doubtless, very appropriate to a priest of Mars, a pagan persecutor, or a popish inquisitor: although *not* exactly bearing the Scriptural marks of a Christian bishop. Mr. Grant, however, candidly confesses, in the preface to the second volume, how anxiously he toiled to praise Laud; his words are—"as a St. John's man, I have certainly felt an *esprit de corps*, in entering into an ample vindication of archbishop Laud. It cost me *more* pains than many may conceive it to have merited; yet there *are* minds, which will deem it not the least interesting part of the work."

And after the example of bishop Tomline, Mr. Grant vouchsafes, in the eleventh chapter, to quote the infidel Hume, in justification of Laud's introducing so many childish and superstitious ceremonies into the church of England; because, says this great judge of spiritual influences, "in a religious age, they tend to mollify that fierce and gloomy spirit of devotion, to which the rude multitude are subject. Laud corrected the *error* of the first reformers, by reviving (*popish*) ceremonies; and presented to the mind some sensible *exterior* observances, which recalled it from its abstractions. Thought relaxed itself

in the contemplation of pictures, postures, vestments, buildings.”

Mr. Grant, probably, when he called in Hume to help him out in the defence of Laud, forgot how very successful the *popish* church has always been in recalling the mind from its abstractions by sensible exterior observances; and how completely she has contrived to relax all thought of religion, in the contemplation of pictures, postures, vestments and buildings.

And, beyond a peradventure, he did *not* recollect the observation of bishop Burnet, in his exposition of the twenty-third article of the Anglican Church, that, “the morals of *infidels* show, that they hate *all* religions equally; or, with this difference, that the *stricter* any are, the more they must hate them; the root of their quarrel being at all religion and virtue.”

Hume therefore, being an incorrigible infidel, very naturally preferred Laud, for substituting popish mummeries and pagan ceremonials, in the place of genuine religion, to the first reformers, who brought back the Anglican Church to the doctrinal purity of the Apostolic age.

Mr. Southey seems, likewise, to entertain a somewhat similar opinion to that of Mr. Hume and Mr. Grant. For in the very able and learned chapter on the state of religion in England, inserted in his Life of Mr. Wesley, Mr. Southey, although he acknowledges that the bulk of the English population was essentially heathen, long *after* their nominal conversion to Christianity, yet is inclined to attribute much more beneficial effects to the dominion of *popery* over Christendom, than the facts recorded in history, will justify.

A fairer ideal of Utopian policy, he says, can scarcely be contemplated, than the papal scheme; *if* it could be regarded apart from the abuses, the frauds, and the crimes, to which it has given birth. And a little farther onward, he declares, that the church could not have effected all this good, if it

had not employed means, which have been too indiscriminately condemned. A religion of *rites* and *ceremonies* was as necessary for the rude and ferocious nations, which overthrew the Roman empire, as for the Israelites, when they were brought out of Egypt. Pomp, and wealth, and authority, were *essential* to its success."

What *spiritual* good was ever effected by the papal scheme, no history has yet informed us. But certainly, a religion of rites and ceremonies has *never yet* been made an instrument in the hand of God, to evangelize any nation, whether barbarous, or semi-savage, or civilized. Our blessed Lord and Saviour himself, while on earth, shrouding his Godhead in the incarnation, used *no* such means; but adopted the plainest preaching of redeeming truth, in direct opposition to a religion, full, even to the overflowing, of the most magnificent, and burdensome rites and ceremonies.

His apostles and disciples, acting under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, used *no* such means; but by the unadorned foolishness of Gospel preaching encountered and vanquished barbarian hordes, quite as rude and ferocious as were the northern and eastern conquerors of imperial Rome. Nor do the faithful followers of their Divine Master, the successors and imitators of his Apostles, the evangelical missionaries of the present day, use any *such* means; and they propound the everlasting Gospel to the darkest idolaters, the fiercest savages, the bloodiest cannibals, in Africa, in Asia, and in America, that ever disgraced the human form, or inflicted suffering upon the human race.

The universal experience of the history of the church of Christ, proves, that the *only* effectual way to convert sinners from the service of sin, and self, and Satan, unto God, is to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified; whether to professed pagans, or to nominal Christians; whether to the children of civilization, or of entire barbarism, or of half culture;

leaving a religion of rites, and ceremonies, and pomp, and wealth, and authority, to heathen priestcraft, and persecuting popery, and established formalism.

Bishop Burnet, an Arminian, and who certainly laboured, through a long life, to uphold the interests of the Anglican Church, describes Laud as a hot, indiscreet man, eagerly pursuing matters, either very inconsiderable or mischievous; such as setting the communion table by the east walls of churches, bowing to it, and calling it the altar; the suppressing the Walloon's privileges; the breaking of lectures; the encouraging sports on the Lord's day; and other similar matters, on which all the zeal and heat of the time was laid out.

His severity in the star-chamber, and high commission court; his violent and inexcusable injustice, in prosecuting bishop Williams; were such visible blemishes, that nothing but the putting him to death in the manner his enemies did, could have raised his character, and set him up as a pattern to all succeeding clergymen, who have adopted his notions, as tests by which to try if men be stanch to the English church establishment. His own diary represents him as an abject fawner on the duke of Buckingham, and a superstitious regarder of dreams.

His defence of himself, written with so much care, in the Tower, is a very mean performance. In it, his intention is to appeal to the world; in most particulars he excuses himself, that he was only one of many, who, either in council, star-chamber, or high commission, voted *illegal* things. Now, allowing this to be true, Laud, as chief minister and prime favourite of Charles, moved the other members as so many miserable machines.

On other occasions he says, the fact against him was proved by only one witness. But how valid soever this defence may be in law, such special pleading is inconclusive in an appeal to the world; for if his guilt be real, in the eye of common morality, no matter whether the proof be abundant or scanty. One

of the most disgusting things in this book is, that after he had seen the evil effects of his violent counsels, and had been so long shut up, and so long at leisure to reflect on what passed in the heat of passion, or in the pride of prosperity, he does *not*, in any one part of that great work, acknowledge his own errors, nor mix in it any wise or pious reflections on the usage he experienced, or the unhappy steps he had made; so that, while his enemies magnified him by their prosecution unto death; his friends, Heylin and Wharton, have as much diminished him; the one by writing his life, and the other by publishing his vindication of himself.

The Arminianism of Laud, and his followers, in the Anglican Church, from the time of the first Charles to the present hour, is, in fact, though not openly avowed in words, but little better than the doctrine introduced in the fifth century of the Christian era, by Morgan, a Welshman, more commonly known by the name of Pelagius. The foundation of this scheme is, that death was *not* the consequence of sin, but the effect of an original law of creation; that the sin of Adam affected himself only, and, of course, there is no original sin, nor human depravity; that the grace or favour of God is given according to human deserts; and that our free will, not Divine influence, is the source of all human piety.

Now this system does not very materially differ from the scheme of our modern formalists; as broached by themselves, and told in their own way.

Dr. Gleig is a bishop of the episcopal church in Scotland, and one of the ablest and most admired of the contributors to the British Critic, and the Anti-jacobin Review; two journals, avowedly instituted and supported as orthodox champions of the Anglican Church establishment; and the sworn foes of all non-episcopalians; but more particularly inveterate against all evangelicals, whether in or out of the pale of the state church. Bishop Gleig has inserted a disserta-

tion on original sin, in his edition of Stackhouse's History of the Bible.

Able and learned, undoubtedly, is this dissertation; as, indeed, are all the writings of the author of the articles, metaphysics and theology, in the Encyclopedia Britannica; but its orthodoxy, to say nothing of its evangelism, many will be disposed to doubt, when they find that it teaches, how Adam's disobedience to the Divine command only incurred the penalty of bodily death; that his posterity derive no moral taint or corruption from him; that children are born into the world quite pure and innocent; that all the iniquity of human kind proceeds from the errors of education and association: in a word, that there is *no* such thing as original or birth sin; the ninth article of the church, in which Dr. Gleig is a bishop, and which article he must have often subscribed, to the contrary notwithstanding.

Bishop Gleig, with an edifying simplicity, marvels in a note, that his Scottish neighbours fancy they smell a strong savour of Socinianism in these episcopal effusions; which are dedicated, "*by permission,*" to Dr. Manners Sutton, the archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, and spiritual father of the Anglican Church establishment.

It is *not* within our present scope to enter into much detail, respecting that important period of ecclesiastical history, which shows by *what* means the merciless Laud caused the general prevalence of *formalism* in the church of England; but let us pause a moment over a few facts and observations, in regard to that most fatal blow to the piety, peace and usefulness of the Anglican ecclesiastical establishment.

The Christian Observer for 1820, in reviewing Cromwell's Memoirs of Cromwell, and dean Kenney's ravings about radical reformers, says, that every care was taken by misjudging politicians, particularly by the ill starred and never to be forgotten archbishop Laud, to inflame *party spirit* to its highest pitch, and

to force upon the opposite party, by his conduct towards them, a feeling correspondent with *his own*; of haughty self-approbation, and entire contempt of all differing sentiments and systems. He seemed determined that those not of his party *should* differ from him, till they *did* differ; and resolved that they *should* hate him, till they *did* hate him. He insisted that they *were*, till he compelled them to *become* enemies of a persecuting state and church; and to overwhelm him, and the secular government that upheld his schemes, in one common ruin.

Under his auspices, and by his direction, intemperate zeal and overweening self-confidence became the law of religion; and men saw, understood, approved nothing but *their own* opinion. In *what* respect does this conduct differ from that pursued by the majority of the English state clergy, towards all who profess evangelism, whether in or out of the national church establishment, at this hour? that is to say, so far as the law of the land allows. The toleration act of William protects dissenters from the fangs of established persecution; but unbeneficed evangelical churchmen have *no* refuge against the wrath of their formal diocesans.

Strong *dogmatism* in religious opinion is frequently akin to confusion and every evil work. Dogmatism on free will and free grace, has been equally pernicious; if Cromwell and the puritans of England were decided Calvinists, the turbulent and rebellious remonstrants of Holland propounded an opposite dogma; and the tyrannical Laud professed to be a high toned, systematic Arminian; though, in fact, he was a thoroughgoing *formalist*, and alike hostile to all evangelical piety, whether found in the followers of John Calvin, or of James Harmesen.

Christians, therefore, should cultivate a Christian spirit more, and a wordy war about party opinions less; and take their standard of conduct and feeling, as well as their doctrine, from the Bible alone.

All *party* feeling, whether connected with this or that outward form of doctrine, or worship, or church government, is ruinous to religion; and most nefarious are the attempts, *now* made by formal divines of all the gradations of rank in the state church, to prove the existence, and to promote the spirit of a religious *schism* among the English established clergy, adverse to the existing order of church and state. No such schism exists, notwithstanding the unhalloed efforts of the formalists to provoke it, and to produce and perpetuate a hostile division between the evangelical clergy in the establishment, and themselves.

Among other causes, the British and Foreign Bible Society has been the means of preventing or removing a schism in the Anglican Church. Though even now it is said, that, in imitation of Laud's infamous precedent, certain lists of the national clergy are handed about among the cabinet ministers and the episcopal bench, marked O, for orthodox, or formal, and P, for puritan, or evangelical; that church preferment might follow accordingly; and the establishment be as thoroughly cleansed from all pure religion and vital piety, as it was by Laud and the star-chamber, under Charles the first; and by Sheldon and the Bartholomew act, under Charles the second.

Infinite pains are taken by the established formalists, to persuade the evangelicals to *become* discontented with the existing order of things, by assuring them that they *are* so; and when they strongly deny it, by still again insisting that they are, and must, and shall be discontented. Loud charges of schismatical guilt are continually growled forth from all the conduit pipes of formalism; and there is not a pious pastor of a flock, in any English parish, far or near, large or small, public or retired, but the ungodly part of his congregation has sufficient warrant from innumerable publications, in the shape of books, journals, and pamphlets, both priestly and prelati-

every month, or week, or day, or hour, to revile him as a methodist, Calvinist, puritan, fanatic, enthusiast, hypocrite, and the like.

Nay, on such base *party* misrepresentations and calumnies are the church preferments dispensed; and, for the most part, effectual care is taken to exclude from the mitre, the stall, and the benefice, those who faithfully preach the evangelical doctrines of the Bible; of the Reformation; of the public formularies of the Anglican Church.

Is *this* the mode by which the national church establishment is to promote piety, and prevent heathenism, throughout England, Wales and Ireland?

Such, however, are the legitimate fruits of that formal, irreligious, persecuting spirit, which Laud entailed upon the church of England. How fit that execrable high priest was to administer metropolitan jurisdiction, may appear from what his own *friend*, Clarendon, who labours hard to extenuate his mal-conduct, says of him.

When he, Laud—writes the noble historian—came into great authority, it may be, he retained too keen a memory of those who had unjustly and uncharitably persecuted him before; and, I doubt not, was so far transported with the *same* passions he had reason to complain of in his adversaries, that, as they accused him of popery, because he had some doctrinal opinions they liked not; so he entertained too much prejudice to some persons, *as if* they were enemies to the discipline of the church, because they concurred with Calvin in some doctrinal points; when they disliked *his* discipline, and revered the government of the church, and prayed for the peace of it, with as much zeal and fervency as any in the kingdom; as they made manifest in their lives, and in their sufferings with it, and for it.

The archbishop, with the primacy in his hand, and the king at his elbow, inspired with the *same* zeal, now made haste to apply remedies to those diseases, which he saw would grow apace. Laud *never* abated

any thing of his severity and rigour towards men of *all* conditions; or in the *sharpness* of his language and expressions, which was so natural to him, that he could *not* debate any thing without some commotion, when the argument was not of moment; nor bear *contradiction* in debate, even in the council, where all men are equally free, with the necessary patience and temper; of which they, who wished him not well, took advantage, and contradicted him into some transport of indecent passion. Lord Cottington would lead him into some political error, drive him into choler, expose him to the company, in presence of the king, and go and dine with him the next day.

It is evident that Clarendon, in his elaborate and extended character of the archbishop, intends to lay the *whole* blame of subsequent events upon the hot-headedness of Laud; and to hold him up as a lasting example to mankind, in proof, that *no pretence* of good intentions, and no sincerity of mistaken zeal, could excuse a man for undertaking that, to which he was wholly incompetent, and from the wrong conduct of which, every one, *except Laud and Charles*, foresaw the inevitable ruin of both church and state.

It was in reference to the deadly consequences of the insane high churchmanship of this peevish, passionate old man, that Clarendon uttered his memorable apothegm;—"that of all persons who *can* read and write, the (*state*) clergy are the most innocent of any practical wisdom, or common sense."

Such was the adviser, to whom, *exclusively*, after the death of Buckingham, and in Strafford's absence, Charles abandoned himself. Laud took every advantage of this misplaced confidence; and, among other expedients for guiding the movements of the royal puppet, prepared a list of established clergy, secretly marked with O, for orthodox, and P. for puritan; which he presented, first to the duke of Buckingham, and then to the king; a measure directly calculated to widen, irreparably, the breach then beginning between loyal subjects in both lists. With which join his silly

additions to the ceremonial of the church; enforced, however, in their observance, with all the bloody brutality of prelatical formalism.

But the consummation of his clerical and civil policy was exhibited in his expedition to Scotland; to impose, *by force*, an entire new church of England ritual on the Caledonian descendants of Knox and Balcanquhal. At the moment when a mine, laid by his own folly and wickedness, was about to be sprung under the feet of his royal master, does this weak, insolent old man crawl to Edinburgh, to touch, with childish hand, that fearful spring of popular feeling, which instantly wrapped all Scotland in a flame of fire; armed a powerful band against the territory of England, and threw a great body of auxiliaries, military, civil and clerical, into the ranks of the English puritans; which at once turned the doubtful scale, and brought on the long poised ruin, in one hideous, wild uproar, upon himself, his party, his church and his king.

When the active energy of Strafford himself could not withstand the mighty desolation; is it surprising that the poor, old, irritable, tremulous archbishop of Canterbury, with his sharp answers, and closet learning, and idle ceremonial, sank, like a baseless column, in the ruin occasioned by his own weakness and tyranny?

The puritans, galled to madness by the dissolution of parliaments, and by Laud's incessant persecution, at length opposed their effectual resistance. Their main grievances, as stated by themselves, were, Laud's encouraging, and preferring a formal and superstitious state clergy, and discouraging the sober and virtuous ministers; and imposing upon all, the inventions of men, in the room of the institutions of God.

Some modern writers discover the presbyterian and puritanical spirit of the parliament, in its treatment of the episcopal clergy. But what was the conduct of *that* clergy, as led and instigated by Laud?

There was a general outcry for civil liberty in the English nation; and Sibthorpe and Mainwaring preached sermons, which were industriously spread *by the court*, over the kingdom. In these sermons *passive obedience* was recommended in its full extent; the *whole* authority of the state was represented as belonging to the king *alone*; and all limitations of law and a constitution, were rejected as seditious and impious.

So openly was this flagitious doctrine espoused by the court, that archbishop Abbot, for refusing to license Sibthorpe's sermon, was suspended from the exercise of his office, banished from London, and confined to a country seat. Abbot's principles of liberty, and opposition to Buckingham, rendered him ungracious at court, and procured the reproach of being a puritan. The puritans made the privileges of the nation a part of their religion; and the high church party were equally zealous for the absolute prerogatives of the crown.

Mainwaring, for his sermon, was impeached and punished by parliament; but no sooner was the session ended, than this man, so justly obnoxious to the legislature, and to every honest person in England, received a pardon from the king, and a valuable living in the church establishment. Some years after, he was made bishop of St. Asaph's. In such good odour were formal, secular state clergy in the royal nostrils of the first Charles.

At this period, also, there was a very general desire in the more serious part of the people of England, for the *better* observance of the Lord's day. In answer to which, out comes, under the sanction and by the command of Charles and Laud, the *Book of Sports*; enjoined to be read in all parish churches. Now, what was the burden of this book, issued by a Christian king, and a protestant bishop?

"Our pleasure likewise is, that the bishop of that diocese take the like straight order with all the puritans and precisians, within the same; either con-

straining them to conform themselves, or *to leave the country*, according to the laws of our kingdom, and canons of our church; and so to strike equally on both hands, against the contemners of our authority, and adversaries of our church. And as for our good people's recreation, our pleasure likewise is, that after the end of divine service, our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreation; *such as dancing, either men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmless recreation; nor from having less recreation; nor from having of May-games, whitsun-ales and morris-dances, and the setting up of May-poles, and other sports therewith used, &c.*"

This measure of the legal head of the establishment, doubtless, was as well calculated to recommend the *religion* of the Anglican Church, as the sermons of Sibthorpe and Mainwaring were to manifest its love of liberty.

Has a copy of Laud's Book of Sports found its way into the city of New-York? In the month of July 1821, several of the most respectable and meritorious of the clergy, of various denominations, proposed to the corporation to call a meeting in the City Hall, in order to devise some means of bringing about a *better* observance of the Sabbath, than the present too prevailing mode of spending that sacred day, in steam-boat excursions, in public gardens, in taverns, in carriages, on horseback; in a word, any where, and any how, except attending divine worship. The proposal was merely to procure the execution of the laws *already in being*, for the decent observance of the Lord's day.

Immediately, those profound theologians, the *doers* of newspapers, Christian, Jew and Gentile, opened in full cry against these clergy, for their unmannerly interference with the Sabbatical recreations of a free and an enlightened people. The epithets, "puritan, persecuting, ambitious, hypocritical, intolerant," and so forth, rang from side to side, against these unfor-

tunate divines. A large *counter-meeting* was got up, consisting of the purest patriots in the community, among whom were some hundreds of Hebrews, the best of all possible judges how a Christian Sabbath ought to be kept; and this goodly concourse of pious people passed a resolution, that the interference of clergy in such matters was highly improper. Huge outcries were raised against church and state, clerical tyranny, and similar enormities; and all design of keeping the Lord's day any better in future, than in time past, was completely quashed.

It is but justice to state, that the newspapers distinctly declared, that the New-York protestant episcopal clergy, generally, had *no* part nor lot in this attempt to procure a more devout observance of the Sabbath.

During Laud's *maladministration* of church and state, the stream of national feeling ran strongly against *popery*; and the sage and sagacious primate delighted to brave and insult public opinion. So suspicious was his conduct, that not only the puritans believed the established church of England to be relapsing fast into popish superstition; but the court of Rome itself expected it, and *twice* offered Laud a cardinal's hat, which he faintly declined; probably, because the scheme was not yet ripe. Succeeding events frustrated the project of a *reunion* between the Anglican and Roman churches; a project, recently revived by Mr. Samuel Wix, for the avowed purpose of abating two great nuisances in the eyes of popery and formalism. But an enormity, which William Laud could not perpetrate in the seventeenth, is not very likely to be achieved by Samuel Wix, in the nineteenth century.

The consequence of Laud's idiotic and unprincipled conduct, was a universal execration of the English church establishment; as the nursery of superstition and impiety; the arsenal of clerical and civil tyranny and persecution. And, accordingly, it was swept away by the tide of indignant rebellion, when

the people of England had been compelled to drain to its very dregs, the cup of suffering and insult, prepared for, and administered to them, by the hands of this execrable arch formalist.

Hume, Mosheim, Clarendon, Burnet—all who have written with any intelligence and honesty, respecting this period, however differing from each other in religious and political opinions—*unite* in attributing the temporary overthrow of the English monarchy and ecclesiastical establishment, to the arbitrary cruelty, and senseless superstition, and *exclusive* churchmanship of Laud.

The legitimate successors of Laud, the secular, formal state clergy of the present day, incessantly revile all evangelical preachers, as *unsound* members of the Anglican Church; and, at the best, as persons of questionable loyalty to the British government. The wilful, deliberate *falsehood* of these charges, is not the greatest evil. Their direct tendency is to degrade and destroy the established church.

When other religious denominations observe the unsparing calumnies, with which so many of the most active, able, useful and learned of the national clergy are, merely because they preach the Gospel faithfully, and live a holy life, pursued and persecuted by a party calling itself orthodox; when they find bishops, and deans, and archdeacons, and rectors, and vicars, and even unfledged curates, joining in the vulgar cant and cry; must they not conclude, that the church establishment loves party strife better than its Bible and its public formularies: and that it is hastening to share the fate of a house divided against itself?

Infidelity, too, which is always closely coupled with, and invariably aided by, formalism, is peculiarly alert and stirring in England now; and cannot fail to thrive mightily by the present efforts of the formal state clergy, to break down the *only* barrier against irreligion and profligacy, in the Anglican Church, by rooting all evangelism out of it. The Christian Observer asks, with emphasis, if *this* is a time to cast

suspicion upon those, who serve in the same church, and minister at the same altar; to tear asunder the bands which unite us with *any* class of Christians, in the interests of the Christian faith; to follow the example of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, when the avenging army was at their gates; to fight about a few mysterious points, which, till the consummation of all things, never *can* be settled, while the enemy is going round our bulwarks, and counting our towers, and undermining the very foundations of the Christian temple?

If it were possible for formalism to learn the necessity of forbearance, of toleration, of charity, she might derive the salutary lesson from the history of the first Charles; which shows, in glaring colours, the *impolicy*, as well as the injustice of classing whole bodies of men, wantonly and indiscriminately, under an *opprobrious* name; and of treating as enemies to the state, all who do not exactly coincide with the powers that be, about *church government*.

By uniting the political and religious puritans, who had, otherwise, *no* necessary connexion, and by affecting to treat them all as of the same faction, Laud *forced* the people of England into a resistless rebellion. In spite of all the efforts of modern formalists in the English church establishment, there will still be Calvinistic dissenters, who may be provoked by calumny, but cannot be bullied into conformity. When Laud began to persecute the puritans, he hoped, as James the first had hoped before him, either to make them conform, or "to harry them out of the country." He used most cruelly oppressive courts, and extensive powers to *compel* conformity, and failed. The bloody Mary, who, perhaps, had more power, but, certainly, *not* more cruelty than Laud, was unable to produce uniformity of doctrine, worship, or discipline.

Indeed, the fulness of universal formalism cannot be produced, in England, or in any other country,

except by a system of general and pitiless extermination; a system, which could not be carried into complete effect, even under the Tudors and Stuarts, by Bonner and by Laud; and which, in the present condition of Christendom, is not very likely to be intrusted to the orthodox hands, either of the bishop of Winchester, or of the Peterborough diocesan, or of the dean of Achonry.

The formal *party* spirit, which is now fast ruining the English church establishment, has been rife in that body, ever since its first introduction by Laud. Bishop Burnet incessantly complains of its existence, and ruinous tendency, during the reigns of the second Charles and James, and William, and Ann. It produced the Bartholomew, the Conventicle, and the Five Mile acts, in England, and the horrible persecutions in Scotland; it defeated the plan of king William for gaining the dissenters by conciliatory measures; it pursued Tillotson with revilings to his grave, because he would not lend his aid to intolerance and persecution; and it *now* labours to cast out of the establishment altogether, the comparatively small portion of evangelical clergy, who *alone*, by their existence and exertion, preserve that establishment from impending perdition.

A constant cry, now sent forth by the formalists in the English church establishment, is uttered against "*the sin of schism*," by which they mean a departure from, or a refusal to join their own particular mode of ecclesiastical discipline and worship.

Schism is a word in high repute among *established* churches, and applied liberally to all who stray beyond their legal pale. For example, the Anglican Church calls all dissenters from her ecclesiastical scheme, schismatics; and the kirk of Scotland compliments with the same title, all seceders from her communion. But schism is a rending of the body of Christ; that is, the church of Christ, which is composed of all true believers, wherever situated, and whenever living. This Christian church, this church

universal, is *not* confined to any particular, outward, visible sect, or denomination, whether established by law, as a state church, or otherwise; whether episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregational; but includes all, of every various persuasion, who worship the Lord Jesus Christ in singleness of heart, in simplicity and in truth. The bond of catholic union between Christian churches is a *common faith*, not a common church government.

Schism, therefore, means a departure from sound evangelical doctrine, and *not* from any particular form of church government or discipline. Hence, all Arians, Socinians, formalists; all who mutilate, or corrupt, or deny, or keep out of sight, the pure doctrines of the ever blessed Gospel, are *schismatics*; whether they be churchmen, or presbyterians, or independents, or methodists, or baptists, or any other sect or portion of the visible Christian church.

At length, Laud, for his intolerance, cruelty, oppression and insolence, was brought to the block, and state episcopacy abolished. The Westminster assembly of divines framed a directory for worship, which superseded the common prayer book; and the presbyterians exercised their ecclesiastical dominion, during the little hour of their political ascendancy, with the same intolerance and injustice, which had been displayed towards themselves by their episcopalian persecutors.

Another pregnant proof this, of the folly and wickedness of giving to *any* church, to *any* religious community, secular and military power, wherewith to injure and harass those who differ from it in opinion. My kingdom is *not* of this world, says the Saviour; and *his* genuine disciples do not covet a worldly sceptre. The permitting a state clergy to punish, with the secular sword, whatever they deem to be religious error, has always been ruinous to the cause of real Christianity; whether in Britain, or in Geneva, or at Rome, or elsewhere.

Doubtless, if the toleration act were to be repealed in England, and the people of that country would submit to it, the established church would *now* re-enact the bloody tragedies against dissidents without, and evangelicals within its pale, that were performed upon the puritans and nonconformists, by the preceding state clergy, under the auspices of Elizabeth and the first four Stuarts. Nor is it less certain, that if *any one* religious sect, in these United States, whether episcopal, or presbyterian, or congregational, were to be interlocked with the civil government, and permitted to wield its sword; this country would again exhibit the same systematic intolerance, which induced the puritans of New-England to burn quakers for nonconformity, and old women for being too intimate with the devil.

Persecution seems to be a necessary adjunct of an established church; and, at this moment, formal English bishops persecute, to the utmost extent of their power, the unbeneficed evangelicals within their dioceses. They are *not*, indeed, as the law now stands, allowed to burn, or imprison, or fine, or torture the victims of their episcopal vengeance; but they labour to *starve* them, by driving them out of their jurisdiction, by prohibiting their performance of any official duty, by depriving them of the means of subsistence; if they dare to preach the pure Gospel, and prove themselves faithful to their ordination vows.

Real Christians are always fearfully outnumbered, in every human society, by the formal, the secular, the profane, and the profligate: and should, therefore, keep themselves pure from all contact with a mere worldly religion, and exert their genial influence over the surrounding region that lieth in wickedness; by the gradual effect of the Gospel on individual converts; and by the higher standard of public morals, which their sentiments and example cannot fail, eventually, to erect.

Dr. Gauden, in his petitionary remonstrance to the protector, estimates the number of episcopal clergy, sequestered by the presbyterians, at between *six and seven thousand*; nearly two-thirds of all the state incumbents. Nor were these governing ecclesiastics always very scrupulous as to whom, or why, they ejected the clerical possessors of church livings. Indeed, dominant ecclesiastical sects have never been very remarkable, in any age, or in any country, for their moderation in the use, nor for their forbearance from the abuse of secular power.

The presbyterians, at this period, ejected the rector of Fittleworth, in Sussex, from his church living, for what they called "a breach of the Sabbath;" which breach, upon examination, turned out to be, that, as he was going to church, in stepping over a stile, a very essential button in his breeches gave way; and he had recourse to a neighbouring tailor to sew it on for him, rather than face his congregation with his nether garment in an unseemly posture. Thus, under the tender mercies of a presbyterian state church, a simple *button breach* cost an honest man his bread.

Doubtless, a large proportion of the sequestered episcopal clergy were *not* very eminent divines, either in theory or in practice; seeing that an established church has always, in itself, a direct tendency to secularize the state religion; a tendency, which, certainly, would not be weakened, under the protecting nightshade of such nursing fathers and nursing mothers, as Elizabeth, James and Charles.

But the presbyterians also sacrificed some of the firstlings of the episcopal flock. Dr. Calamy, himself, says, "I readily acknowledge many of the sufferers to have been men of great worth and eminence. I am sincerely sorry they met with such usage; and can, as heartily as any man, lament the rigorous treatment of such excellent persons as bishop Moreton, bishop Hall, bishop Prideaux, bishop Brownrigg, &c. I have not the least word to say in vindication of it.

Bishop Hall's Hard Measure, written by himself, added to the account of the specialties of his life, and dated May 29, 1647, would make any man's heart bleed, that reads it."

In John Walker's "Attempt towards recovering an account of the numbers and sufferings of the clergy of the church of England," will be found many facts, that prove the hardness of presbyterian dominion, while it remained the prevailing state sect. It is *not* intended to justify the vindictive bitterness, the virulence, the illiberality, the calumny, in which Mr. John Walker indulges himself; for the man seems to have been a full-fledged formalist; but, merely, to refer to the unquestionable facts collected by him, showing, that clerical oppression was not confined to Laud and the hierarchy; but prevailed, also, among the presbyterians of the commonwealth, as soon as they obtained the power of the secular sword, to manifest, effectually, their deadly hostility to all religious toleration.

The parliament professed to allow *one-fifth* of the income of the benefices to the wives and families of the sequestered clergy; but if the account given by bishop Hall, in his Hard Measure, be correct, as applicable to his brethren in distress, as well as to himself; a very small proportion of this fifth ever reached the hands of the sufferers. Little as it was, however, it, by so much as its whole amount, exceeded the munificence of Charles and his bishops, to the nonconformists, whom they ejected; for to these men they allowed, absolutely, *nothing* but famine, and the dungeon, and incessant persecution.

Whether Cromwell possessed any personal piety or not, he, undoubtedly, did infinitely more for the *protestant* religion, than all the four Stuarts put together, notwithstanding they were the legitimate heads, and supreme pontiffs of the established church of England. For he not only prohibited, to the utmost of his power, all persecution on account of religious

opinions at home, within the English realm, during his protectorate; but extended his influence in favour of protestants, on the European continent.

For example, when the duke of Savoy raised a new persecution against the Vaudois, Cromwell sent to cardinal Mazarin, then premier of France, to put a stop to it; adding, that he well knew the French government had the Italian duke in their power, and could restrain him, if they pleased; and if they did not, they must prepare for a rupture with England. Mazarin objected to this, as an unreasonable requisition: he promised to interpose his good offices, but could not be obliged to answer for their result. Cromwell persisted, and Mazarin ordered the duke of Savoy to desist from his bloody persecution; which being done, the English protector raised a large sum of money for the Vaudois, and sent over Morland to settle all their concerns, and to supply all their losses.

About the same time, there was a tumult at Nismes, in which the Huguenots were disorderly; and apprehending some severity from their government, they sent a person over to Cromwell, who sent him back to Paris, within an hour, with a letter to his ambassador, directing him, either to get the matter passed over, or to leave France immediately. Mazarin complained of this proceeding, as too imperious; but yielded. These things raised Cromwell's character all over Europe; as well they might.

Cromwell, also, designed to establish a *council* for the protestant religion; in opposition to the society *de propagandâ fide*, at Rome. It was to consist of seven counsellors, and four secretaries, for different provinces:—the first, to include France, Switzerland, and the Valleys; the second, the palatinate, and the other Calvinists; the third, Germany, the north, and Turkey; the fourth, the East and West Indies. The secretaries were to keep up a correspondence every where, in order to ascertain the state of religion all over the world; so that protestantism might be protected and assisted. Chelsea

college was to be fitted up for them; and the funds necessary for the execution of this great object, to be regularly supplied. Death prevented the accomplishment of this noble project; and Charles the second was *not* the man exactly calculated to perfect the unfinished schemes of Cromwell.

What a magnificent contrast does the English protector's public conduct, in regard to religion, present to the behaviour of the Stuarts; who not only abandoned the protestants of continental Europe to the envenomed fury of their popish persecutors, but also heaped every species of indignity and torture upon their own protestant people, at home.

One fact of James the second ought never to be forgotten; as it shows, not only the horrible barbarity of *his* nature, but also, what the tender mercies of *popery* are, whenever it has power to use its own favourite arguments against all that will not subscribe to the bloodiest system of fraud, that was ever imposed upon suffering and degraded humanity.

During the persecutions, inflicted by Charles the second, and the English state church, upon the Scottish people, to dragoon them into episcopacy, whoever was to be struck in the *boots*, was tortured in the presence of the council; upon the occurrence of which, almost all the members endeavoured to escape. The sight was so dreadful, and the agony of the smashed and mangled sufferer so horrible, that without a *royal* order from the head of the established church, restraining a given number to stay, the board would have been forsaken. But James, then duke of York, during his stay in Scotland, manifested a truly infernal delight at this shocking spectacle, and looked on during the whole process of mangling the miserable victim, with an eager attention, as if he had been witnessing some curious experiment upon inanimate and insensible matter.

Yet not all the atrocities of the Stuarts, father, son and grandsons; nor the fury of that red-handed

butcher, Lauderdale, could keep even pace with the insatiable blood-thirst of *James Sharp*, the established archbishop of St. Andrews; an execrable wretch, who had been a presbyterian clergyman; who had been intrusted by the presbyterians with their most important interests; who had basely betrayed all his trust; who, *for this* very consummation of perfidy, was raised to the archiepiscopate, by that sanctimonious head of the English protestant episcopal church, Charles the second; who proved himself to be a truly primitive state bishop, by a long series of fraud, falsehood, perjury, persecution, and murder; and who, at length, fell under the knives of the *covenanters*, whom he had, for many years, hunted, tortured, plundered, massacred, without mercy, and without remorse, for the sole crime of worshipping the Lord their God, according to the dictates of their own conscience.

Cromwell experienced some trouble, in *settling*, as the cant political phrase runs, the religion of England. For when the fury and perfidy of Laud had put both the monarchy and the state church of England *in abeyance*, many wild and strange notions about religion, both individual and national, were spread abroad. The presbyterians were afraid of the commonwealth men, or republicans; many of whom set up for deists, and were urgent for the destruction of all sorts of clergy, and for breaking up every vestige of a church establishment. They advised the pulling down all churches, discharging all tithes, and leaving religion to shift for itself, without either encouragement or restraint, on the part of the civil government; the latter part of which experiment is now in progress, throughout these United States.

Cromwell assured the presbyterians, that he would maintain a public ministry; and he joined them in a commission with some of the independents, to be the *triers* of all applicants for benefices. These triers

also disposed of all the churches in the gift of the crown, or of the bishops, and likewise of the cathedrals.

Cromwell laboured to divide the republican party among themselves; to set the fifth monarchy men and enthusiasts against those who disregarded religion, and professed to act only on the principles of civil liberty; as Algernon Sidney, Henry Nevil, Martin, Wildman and Harrington. The fifth monarchy men professed to live in daily expectation of Christ's appearance in London. John Goodwin headed these fanatics, and was the first who introduced Arminianism among the puritans. The protector called himself a Calvinist; as were the independents generally. Yet none of the preachers were so staunch to him in temporal matters, as Goodwin; who, not only justified the decapitation of Charles, but magnified it as the most glorious of all human transactions. He turned the brains of his followers, if not his own, with the expectations of an *immediate* millennium, or the glorious reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years. Some of these saints, however, afterwards, as Dr. South observes, took Tyburn, in their way to heaven.

On the whole, Cromwell was himself tolerant towards all religious persuasions: the fifth monarchy men he treated in their own way, with mystical discourses, and long, unintelligible prayers; the other republicans he considered as heathens; and the episcopalians he suffered to hold their meetings in several places about London, free from all molestation.

Bishop Burnet says, that when his own designs did not lead him out of the way, Cromwell was a lover of justice and virtue, and even of learning, though much decried at that time. He studied to seek out able and honest men for his employment. His gentleness had much quieted the people in relation to him; and his maintaining the honour of England, in all foreign nations, highly gratified them. Though

not a crowned head, his ambassadors had all the respect paid to them, which any English king's envoys received; and *much greater* than was ever shown to those of the second Charles and James; more especially at the French court.

The Dutch were in such dread of the protector, that when Charles, or his brother, came to see their sister, the princess royal, they used to send a deputation, saying that Cromwell had required of the states to give them no harbour. Charles, when seeking a pretence for war, in 1672, against Holland, assigned as a reason, that some of *his* rebels were suffered to live there. Borel, the Dutch ambassador, answered, that it was an ancient maxim with them, not to inquire why strangers lived in Holland; but to receive them all, unless they had conspired against the persons of princes. Charles then reminded him, how the states had used himself and his brother. Ha, sire!—replied Borel—*c'estoit une autre chose*. Cromwell *estoit un grand homme, et il se faisoit craindre, et par terre, et par mer*.

Charles answered—*je me feray craindre aussy à mon tour*. But Charles did *not* keep his word; for, like his father, and his grandfather, he was formidable *only* to the British people, whom he deceived, oppressed and persecuted. He was the contempt and scorn of all foreign nations.

It was a prevailing fashion among Charles the second's state clergy, to brand the puritans as authors of his father's death. But Calamy, Marshal, Whitaker, Sedgwick and Ash, eminent presbyterian ministers, when consulted, declared that the army disapproved of killing the king. Forty-seven other ministers protested against it; for which they were threatened by the army leaders. Sixty ministers in Essex, and fifty-four in Lancashire, most rigid puritans, also protested against the execution of Charles. Nay, Cromwell complained, that he and his council of officers were thwarted in their designs upon the king, by the opposition of the presbyterian parsons. Nor were the independent clergy

more favourable to this measure ; upon which they preserved an ominous silence, when preaching before the parliament, at a time, when to applaud the king's execution, was the high road to ecclesiastical preferment.

The truth seems to be, that Cromwell, and the other military leaders of the parliament party, knew that they could never trust Charles ; and in self-defence, put him to death, rather than replace him in a situation, which would enable him to confer the same kindness upon them.

The parliament having put down state episcopacy, the Westminster assembly of divines laboured to conform England to Scottish presbyterianism ; unmindful, it should seem, of their own complaints against the episcopal church, for having cemented *their* uniformity with the tears and blood of the dissenting puritans. This assembly consisted of one hundred and forty-three presbyterian, and seven independent ministers ; men, generally, of great talent, and profound theological learning ; as their written labours, particularly their Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, fully prove.

Laud, and his formalist followers, with their wonted good faith, have always reviled this assembly as a rabble of ignorant Brownists. Able and learned as they were, however, they had *not* sufficiently drank into their Divine Master's spirit, to abstain from encroaching on the rights of conscience, and labouring to *compel* people to believe in presbyterianism, as the established, or state religion. But the parliament passed a law, abolishing all penal statutes relating to religion ; and allowing all to worship according to their own will, on swearing allegiance to the government.

This Christian toleration was constantly denounced by the presbyterians, as a crying sin ; and the various sects bitterly vituperated, as so many deadly wounds to "*the church*." So absurd and dangerous is it to intrust *any* religious body with power to persecute ; and so propense are all established, or state

clergy, to harass their fellow-men, for the good of *the* church; meaning thereby their own peculiar sect.

A large portion, some thousands, of the episcopal clergy conformed to the new order of things; for a national church never lacks an abundance of *vicars of Bray*. These clerical conformists were *not* allowed to read the liturgy; and the use of the old form of prayer was prohibited in private families. Such notions of religious liberty prevailed among those very men, who had suffered, and had but just escaped from under the harrow of Laud and his merciless inquisition.

The state of *real* religion, of vital piety, in England, during the interregnum, it is not easy to ascertain. The formal churchmen delight to represent it as the era of ignorance, fanaticism and hypocrisy; the puritans extol it as an age of universal piety. Neither of these descriptions is strictly correct. No doubt the Sabbath was highly honoured; and the public discourses delivered at that time, both by presbyterian and independent clergy, are equal to any which have been produced in England, since the Reformation; in point of sound learning, theological research, Scriptural knowledge, practical usefulness, and popular eloquence.

Nevertheless, Mr. Neale indulges in a little poetry when he says, that "the great body of the people were sincerely religious." For how does it appear, that the millions of ignorant, heathenish, profligate formalists, whom Laud so tenderly cherished, while he incessantly persecuted all vital religion, were ever converted to Christianity? And if they were, whence arose the millions of the same order of men, who, on the restoration of Charles, deluged England with impiety and crime? Neither Britain, nor any other nation, can be transformed into a Christian community, by a mere change of temporal rulers, or of church government; or, according to act of parliament.

Doubtless, as lord Clarendon observes, hypocrisy and fanaticism contributed, at that time, largely, to form the English character. It was the fashion of the commonwealth rulers, to make the people religious; as it was of Charles and Laud, to make them high church formalists; and of the second Charles and his courtiers, to make them openly profane and licentious. In consequence, there was a general appearance of godliness throughout the nation. Open irreligion was checked, and compelled to take shelter under the cloak of that serious profession, which led to preferment. But this very fact proves, that there was a vast aggregate of real piety in England, at that period; for the *extent* of hypocrisy must always be regulated, in every community, by that of true religion.

If religion had not been spread generally over the English nation, there could have been *no* effectual demand for extensive hypocrisy; which, in itself, is never any thing more than the homage of vice to virtue. If the great body of the English people had not then highly valued religion, it could *not* have been worth the while of their leading statesmen to play the hypocrite; and affect the semblance of piety, in order to render themselves acceptable to the nation at large. If the statesmen of the *present* day, in Europe, and in America, do *not* find it necessary to conceal their entire disregard for all vital Christianity; but can *afford* to avow, either their formal indifference, or their speculative and practical infidelity; it only proves that there is *too little* real religion in their respective communities, to compel them to wear the mask of hypocrisy, and assume the appearance of that piety which is so generally diffused. It only proves, that the hosts of formalists and infidels, *now*, are more numerous, and more daring in Christendom, than they were in some former ages.

The truth is, there *was*, at that time, a great portion of religious knowledge diffused among all ranks of the English people. The long parliament itself

was an assembly of theologians; and the preachers laboured zealously in their vocation; though being narrowed in their views by sectarian bigotry, they were bitter enemies to all Christian toleration. Yet the author of the "Conformist's Plea for the Nonconformists," says, "in many hundreds of sermons I never heard their differences of sentiment; though one was considered a presbyterian, another an independent, and a third an episcopalian; nor was Calvin deified, or preached, any further than as Christ spake in him."

It would, indeed, be bitter mockery, to compare the state of real religion in England, under the protectorate of Cromwell, and during the perfidious, profligate reign of the second Charles. Whatever might be the amount of the protector's personal piety, it could not, *possibly*, be less than that of the king, who succeeded him. His chaplains, Owen and Howe, were, at least, equal in piety, talent, learning and integrity, to any who have ever ministered in the same capacity to the Tudors, the Stuarts, or the Brunswicks.

On the accession of Charles, the constrained decency of the commonwealth was exchanged for the most openly avowed profligacy. But *who* were the hypocrites? the puritans, who suffered every species of persecution, rather than renounce their faith, and let go their integrity? or those high church formalists, who, during the protectorate, wore the garb of solemn conformity; and, under the auspices of Charles, exhibited the most barefaced irreligion and immorality? Of such efficacy is the scheme of reducing a whole nation to the uniform paces of a political state church.

The actual state of religion in a country, is of much greater importance, than *mere politicians*, however profoundly and comprehensively versed in economics, can be taught to appreciate. The historical books of Scripture emphatically teach this momentous lesson, that God is governor among the nations;

that righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people; that the periods of national history are prosperous or calamitous, in proportion as piety prevails or languishes.

A stronger confirmation of this awful truth cannot be found, than in the periods now under consideration. How terrible to all her foes abroad, as well as secure at home, was England, during the protectorate of Cromwell, when a great portion of her people were seriously inclined, and religion was encouraged; and how soon thereafter was she filled with internal disorder, and bowed her head to the dust, when Charles hunted every thing in the shape of piety, into the dungeon, or into exile, or into the sepulchre; and spread the full tide of irreligion, and its *inseparable* accompaniments, iniquity and profligacy, over every corner of the land. Then, the people were quickly dispirited and despised, and *the king himself* became a hireling pensioner of the French court.

For a full exposition of the base servieney of the second Charles and James to the cabinet of France, see the works of Louis the fourteenth; Mr. Fox's History of the early part of the reign of James the second; and Mr. Rose's Observations on Mr. Fox's book. In these publications may be seen the *secret* treaties between the French and English courts; and the melancholy contrast between the high national character of England, while, under Cromwell, she kept all Europe in awe; and her degraded, abject condition, when, under Charles and James, she was a vassal province of France.

Bishop Burnet imputes the mischiefs of Charles's reign, to his being restored *without conditions*. And when the earl of Southampton began to see what a curse this head of the established church was likely to prove; in great wrath, he accused lord Clarendon as the cause of all they felt, or feared; for if he, Hyde, had not *misrepresented* his master so much in all his letters, they would have taken care to put it

out of his power to do so much mischief. Hyde answered, that he thought Charles had so much *good nature* and judgment, that when the age of pleasure, and the idleness of exile was over, he would get rid of all entanglements, and attend to business.

Clarendon lived long enough to experience, in his own person, *what* kind of nature and judgment Charles was capable of exhibiting; in return for a long life of the most important political services rendered to himself and to his father, in their greatest hour of need.

At the restoration, Arminianism was declared to be the *court* religion; and was, accordingly, adopted by the great body of the episcopal clergy, now re-established as the state church. Charles understood the business of kingcraft so far, as to be aware, that he could never bow the stubborn sinews of a Calvinistic ministry to the bloody idolatries of papal Rome.

Before Charles left Paris, he embraced the Romish superstition; cardinal de Retz was in the secret; and lord Aubigny promoted it; though Clarendon could not, for a long time, be induced to believe his royal master quite so base. It was, however, known in France; for De Retz urged his kinsman, and particular friend, the marquis De Roucy, one of the first French families that continued protestant to the last, to embrace popery; urging, as the chief reason, that protestantism was on the point of ruin; that the Huguenots could expect no aid from England; for both Charles and James Stuart were already become papists.

As a natural consequence of his secret popery, and avowed support of the English protestant episcopal church, in the capacity and character of its supreme, secular, established head, Charles persecuted, with the fangs of a fiend, every appearance of evangelical religion; and exhibited a most edifying spectacle to his state clergy, in regularly issuing from the chambers of his kept mistresses, to the national church, even on sacrament days; and in usually holding his royal court

in the same mansions of pollution ; and compelling the ministers to apply to his prostitutes for civil and religious promotion.

Sheldon was his favourite among the established clergy, because he considered, and always spoke of religion as a mere engine of government, and a matter of policy ; for which Christian qualification he was made, first, bishop of London, and then archbishop of Canterbury.

Lord Clarendon, *at first*, urged the importance of relaxing the rigour of full formalism introduced by Laud into the English established church ; and of making due concessions to the common sense and consciences of men ; in order to induce the dissenters, particularly the presbyterians, to unite themselves with the establishment. But Charles's state bishops vehemently opposed this wise and benevolent measure, because the presbyterians were possessed of most of the great benefices in the established church, chiefly in London and in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

It is necessary to state, because it is either not generally known, or, if known, studiously concealed by most of the English church writers of the present day, that *all* the clergy, who had been substituted in the place of those ministers, who were sequestered by the parliament or their visitors, were *removed* from their livings and benefices at the restoration ; as being illegally possessed of other men's rights. And this was done even where the former incumbents were dead ; because a title, deemed originally defective, was still considered as defective in law. So that the *two thousand* evangelical ministers, ejected by the Bartholomew act, were so much additional balance in favour of formalism and persecution ; and *not* a mere measure of milder retaliation, on the part of the state church ; as it is represented, even by some of the most respectable English writers ; for example, the Christian Observer, and Mr. Southey, in his Life of John Wesley.

At the restoration, a great number of the puritans were *legally* possessed of eminent posts in the established church. Many of these, especially in the city of London, had been signally instrumental in restoring Charles; and on that score, were entitled to gratitude and preferment from the crown. The king, however, in *seeming* concert with his state bishops, affected to believe, that none ought to serve *him*, Charles, (*not* Christ,) as the head of the national church of England, but clergymen firmly tied to his interests, by tory principles, by political tests and subscriptions, and by penal oaths.

Nevertheless, Charles, in the genuine spirit of Stuart hypocrisy and fraud, put on the semblance of moderation; while he was engaged in another, and a deeper, and a more deadly scheme, to which the intolerant cruelty of the formal, secular, high church, state clergy, proved subservient, and aiding; namely, the introduction of *popery*, as the religion of England. A popish queen kept this superstition in fashion at court; and the Romish priests were indefatigable in making converts and children for the old lady of Babylon.

Before we enter upon the detail proof of this summary of facts, it may be well to notice an apparent error in the Christian Observer for 1811, in respect to the *supposed* retaliation of the church, or rather, of the state, by the Bartholomew act of Charles the second.

The writer of the review of Bogue and Bennet's History of Dissenters, says, "we are happy that it does *not* lie upon us, or upon the church, of which we are members, to vindicate the conduct of the government and clergy, in the treatment of the nonconformists. The church of England is *no more* implicated in this act of her ruling members, and those who influenced her proceedings, at that time, than the civil part of the constitution is accountable for the conduct of such a judge as Jeffries. But there is some plausibility in the argument, that the puritan

ministers, who occupied the livings at the restoration, were *usurpers*; and it was only depriving them of what was *not* their own, and of which they had enjoyed the unjust profit for a long course of years, to *eject* them from their benefices.

“We confess the measure would have pleased us better, though then but little, had it been executed on the honest, avowed principle of *secular* restitution; than, by prescribing terms of communion, with which it was *impossible* for the puritans, with a safe conscience, to comply, to usurp the false appearance of justice. The credit of the act of uniformity, we would much more willingly give to the *state*, than to the *church*. The expulsion, more especially, the *silencing* of such ministers, as those who refused to conform, was a serious injury, both to the church and to the nation.”

To the liberal and catholic spirit of these remarks, every Christian will cordially subscribe; but it seems a *mistake*, to suppose, that the act of uniformity was passed, *in order* to get rid of those puritan ministers, who had been instituted in the place of the sequestered episcopal clergy; for *all* these puritan substitutes were ejected *before* the passing of the Bartholomew statute; which was an *additional* blessing, bestowed by Charles, and his state bishops, on the English established church, in driving out two thousand evangelical clergymen from her bosom; and leaving within it a goodly body of secular formalists, who, certainly, did *not*, either in precept or in practice, brighten the Scriptural doctrines of the reformation.

The Anglican Church has *never yet* recovered from the effects of this deadly blow. From August 1662, till the middle of the reign of George the second, a period of eighty years, formalism and irreligion pervaded the great body of the English national clergy; and, although since the year 1742, a great *revival* of religion has taken place among the national clergy; a revival, be it remembered, constantly and virulently

opposed and persecuted by the church establishment, *as such*, by the great body of the bishops and dignitaries of the secular governors, and of the lay patrons; it is doubtful, if *now*, in 1822, there be so many as two thousand evangelical ministers, out of the whole number of the state clergy.

Nay, if there were as many evangelical clergymen, now in the English establishment, as were cast out of it on Bartholomew day, their *proportion* to the English population is not quite one-third; there being in 1662, less than four millions of people in England and Wales; whereas the returns in 1822, gave an amount of more than twelve millions. Whence a very minute portion of the laity of England, not one twelfth, has an opportunity of hearing, within the walls of their established church, the reformed, the scriptural doctrines of her liturgy, articles, and homilies.

In the history of his own time, bishop Burnet says, the first point in debate between Charles and his prelates, and cabinet ministers, was, if concessions should be made, and pains taken to gain the dissenters, especially the presbyterians. The earl of Clarendon was much for it, and got the king to publish a declaration, concerning ecclesiastical affairs, to which, *if he had stood*, the greatest part of them might have been gained; but the *bishops* did not approve of this; and after the service they did that lord, in the duke of York's marriage with his daughter, he would not venture to differ from them. Which disgusted lord Southampton, who was for carrying on the design, much talked of during the wars, of *moderating* matters, both in church government, and in worship and ceremonies.

The consideration of the bishops and their party, was, that the presbyterians possessed most of the great benefices of the church, chiefly in London, and in the two universities. It is true, continues Burnet, *all* that had come into the room of those, who were turned out by the parliament, or their visit-

ors, were removed by the course of law, as men illegally possessed of other men's rights ; and that, even where the former incumbents were dead, because a title, originally wrong, was still wrong in law. But there were a great many of them, in very eminent posts, who were *legally* possessed of them. Many of these, chiefly in London, had gone into the design of the restoration, in so signal a manner, and with such success, that they had great merit, and a just title to very high preferment.

These, then, were the clergy who merited preferment, that the state bishops desired to cast out, and for whom they prepared the infamous act of uniformity ; and *not*, as the Christian Observer supposes, the puritan ministers, who had been substituted for the sequestered episcopal clergy ; seeing, that they were already driven forth. Nor can the credit of the Bartholomew act be ascribed to the state ; for the statesmen of England, including even Clarendon, till he sacrificed both conscience and wisdom on the shrine of family ambition, were against the measure. The credit of endeavouring to stifle evangelical religion in England, must be attached to the bishops of the established church ; at that time headed by Sheldon, of whom Burnet says, he seemed not to have a deep sense of religion, *if any* at all ; and spoke of it most commonly, as of an engine of government, and a matter of policy ; by *this* means, the king came to look on him, as a wise and *honest* clergyman, because he had *no* sense of religion.

Sheldon was first made bishop of London, and, upon Juxon's death, promoted to Canterbury. Have not qualifications similar to those of Sheldon, carried *other* clerks to the highest eminences in established churches ; necessary as they are assumed to be, for the promotion of piety, and the prevention of paganism ?

The sad experience of history proves, that whenever men are persecuted on account of their reli-

gious opinions, the state church generally *outruns* the civil government, in the race of persecution and cruelty; an irreligious churchman being always a more horrible fiend than an irreligious layman; on the acknowledged ground, that the best things, when abused, become the worst. A minister of the sanctuary *ought* to be more pure, more holy, more exemplary, in all his life and conversation, than other men; but if he be a hypocrite, a formalist, an infidel, how much greater is his wickedness, his disregard of all the restraints of conscience, as well as his condemnation!

In the instance now under consideration, the *secular* restitution had been already made, by removing, in due course of law, all those puritan ministers, with whom the parliament had filled up the vacant benefices of the sequestered clergy; and the act of uniformity was a gratuitous curse, inflicted by the bishops themselves on the church of England. Besides, if Gauden be correct in his statement, that the sequestered clergy amounted to between *six* and *seven* thousand, the ejecting only *two* thousand nonconformists by the Bartholomew act, was *not* a sufficient secular restitution, as it would still leave four or five thousand usurpers untouched.

No, the object of Sheldon and his mitred brethren was, to drive out of the established church, clergymen more conscientious, more scrupulously religious than themselves. If ever the Anglican Church is to recover from this deep stab into her vitals, it can *only* be by the increase, among her clergy, of such evangelical men as the Bartholomew act consigned to penury, to imprisonment, to death. Such ministers *alone* can preserve that clerical establishment from entire perdition. A secular, irreligious, formal clergy is the *most* grievous curse, that can be inflicted upon any church, or any nation; and the greater the number of such clerical formalists, the greater is the aggregate amount of the curse.

It is worthy of notice, how immense must be the difference, as to the *national effect* produced by a formal, irreligious clergy, in England, and in these United States. Here, in this country, where no political alliance exists between any one religious sect and the state, if, in any particular communion, the clergy should become, generally, formalists; and keep back, or dilute, or pervert the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity; the people would gradually file off, and betake themselves to some denomination, where the Gospel is preached; and the formal sect, in consequence, would be depleted; and could recover its health and strength, *only* by a return to evangelism in faith and life.

But in England, a formal state clergy thins the established church, to swell the ranks of hostile sects; of disqualified dissenters, of proscribed religionists. And, whenever the national clergy shall have *sufficiently* lost the respect and confidence of the English people, by the habitual, the systematic neglect of their most sacred duties, that ecclesiastical establishment *must* perish; and of such an event, so intimately interwoven is it with the *secular* interests of the leading families in the British empire, no human wisdom can possibly foresee the consequences, immediate and remote.

Burnet says, that on the restoration of Charles, the very professions of piety and virtue were thrown off; and that entertainments and drunkenness so overran the three kingdoms, as to corrupt all their morals. Great disorder and riot prevailed every where; together with a ridicule and scorn of *all* religion. Charles himself had a good understanding, and a soft, affable manner, which pleased all who came near him, until they found that *no dependance* could be placed upon his ready-made smiles, kind words, and fair promises.

He seemed to have *no* sense of religion; both at prayers and sacrament, he *took care* to satisfy people, that *he* was not concerned in the employment.

He said once to Burnet, that he was no atheist, but could not think that God would make a man miserable, *only* for taking a little pleasure. He disguised his *popery* to the last; but when he talked freely, he reviled the liberty, which, under the Reformation, men took of inquiring into matters of religion; whence they were apt to inquire into matters of state. And he often said, government was *safer* where the authority was believed infallible; and the faith and submission of the people implicit.

Doubtless, Charles, like every other perfidious, and hardhearted tyrant, preferred popery to protestantism, as a better instrument of enslaving both the souls and bodies of the people; but Charles was the avowed legal head of the English established protestant church; and the sworn defender of its most holy faith.

Soon after his restoration, it was observed, that he would *not* marry a protestant; and a match was negotiated between him and the infanta of Portugal. So base and besotted were the English and Scottish parliaments, that, though they had seen the perdition produced by the popish queen of the first Charles, no one moved against this measure, except the earl of Cassilis, in Scotland, who proposed an address for the king to marry a protestant. When the archbishop of Canterbury performed the marriage ceremony, in the summer of 1662, the queen was so bigoted a papist, that she would not make the responses, nor endure the sight of the primate. Charles muttered the words hastily, and they were pronounced married persons. They were privately married in the popish way, by lord Aubigny, and James afterwards king of England, was one of the witnesses.

She was a mean looking, ill tempered woman, whom Charles soon neglected, and visited his mistresses openly. Nay, so regardless of all exterior decency was this supreme head of the established Anglican Church, that, for the peculiar edification of his chaplains, bishops, and courtiers, he usually

went from the lodgings of these accommodating ladies, to the national church, even on sacrament Sundays, when this devout monarch received the holy communion. For, those protestant English bishops, who framed the Bartholomew act, had no notion of imitating the conduct of that patriarch of Constantinople, who *refused* to admit his flagitious emperor to the Lord's table. The enraged sovereign replied—"I will communicate, for I have sinned like David." "Go then," rejoined the primate, "and *repent* of your murder and adultery, like David, before you presume to commemorate the Saviour's death."

Charles held his court in these unhallowed chambers, while, to the presiding priestesses, application was made for clerical and secular preferment. The earls of Southampton and Clarendon were the *only two* of all the spiritual and lay expectants, who would *not* stoop to solicit favours in these kennels of royal prostitution.

Bishop Burnet thus describes some of Charles's leading prelates: Juxon, archbishop of Canterbury, had never been much of a divine, and was now superannuated and disregarded by the king. Sheldon had been reputed learned, before the wars; but was now so deep in *politics*, that scarcely any prints of learning remained. He was dexterous in business, quick of apprehension, shrewd in judgment; very courteous in manner, but few depended on his professions of friendship. He won Charles's good opinion, by always treating religion as a mere political machine; and *therefore*, obtained Lambeth at Juxon's death.

Morley was a Calvinist, as to the Arminian points, and was thought a friend to the puritans before the wars; from which suspicion, however, he thoroughly cleared himself, after he was made a state bishop. He was first raised to the see of Worcester, then of Winchester; and although he did *not* make the best use of the great wealth, which flowed in upon him,

he was a much honester, though less able man than Sheldon.

If it be said by the advocates of a national church establishment, that things are *now* ordered better in England; that Charles the second was a bad man and a licentious hypocrite; an ostensible protestant, and a concealed papist; that the British constitution was not then settled; but that *now*, the English government always selects proper men to fill the episcopal bench; the answer is obvious: that the intimate alliance between church and state, in England, is, to the full, as pernicious in its tendencies to stifle pure, evangelical religion, *now*, as it was in the time of the Stuarts; at least, so far as the *general* providing of bishops and dignitaries for the establishment reaches; the comparatively very few evangelical appointments being merely exceptions to, and deviations from, the ordinary current of state church patronage.

To be sure, the law, as established at the revolution of 1688, and somewhat modified since, does *not* now permit the national clergy to persecute and oppress the dissenters, as they did under the sacred auspices of the second Charles; but the church of England is still *regularly* filled with secular, formal, irreligious bishops, priests and deacons. No other proof is wanting of the *necessary* tendency to evil, engendered by the close connexion of the Anglican Church with a secular empire, than the simple fact, that, in the present age, the British government has actually made such clerks as Tomline, Marsh and Mant, bishops; for the sole merit of having laboured to explain away the essential doctrines of the church of England, as expressed in her articles; and to fasten the foul stain of *popery* upon a protestant establishment, by imposing upon it the burdens of double justification, of unscriptural, sophisticated questions, and of baptismal regeneration.

Not one of the four Stuarts ever committed an act of deadlier hatred against those evangelical doctrines;

to establish which, our venerable reformers underwent the agonizing horrors of martyrdom. But *ex quo vis ligno fit Mercurius*; a formal, secular, irreligious bishop may be carved out of *any* block of wood.

The truth is, the English established church is a *political* machine, invented, and put into operation for the purpose of swelling the patronage and influence of the crown, nominally, but really of the existing administration; and also, of providing an easy and an ample subsistence for the younger branches of the noble and gentle families of the realm. For these exclusively regal, political and aristocratic objects, the religion and morals of the English people are put in perpetual jeopardy. If the archbishops, bishops, deans, prebendaries, canons, archdeacons, rectors, vicars, curates, throughout the whole of that complicated hierarchy, were to acquit themselves, *generally*, as faithful, evangelical ministers, it would be *impossible* for so large a body of audacious infidels, and radicals, to swarm, like a pestilence, in the British isles.

But while a secular government, and a lay patronage, to the utter exclusion of the congregations from all part, and lot, and voice in the selection of the clerk who is to administer to them spiritually, continue to fill the church with bishops, and dignitaries, and other clerical incumbents; it is *not* possible to create an evangelical clergy in the English establishment; seeing that we have no right to expect, in the ordinary course of human affairs, that the king and his cabinet ministers, and the nobility and gentry of the British empire, *generally*, shall ever be, themselves, evangelically inclined; and, consequently, disposed to turn the stream of their church patronage into an evangelical channel.

Neither is enmity to vital Christianity, and to the distribution of the Holy Scriptures, and a decided preference of popery to all protestant dissent from the state church, confined to the Anglican hierarchs;

but it also pervades the inferior clergy ; a notable example of which we have in the proposal of the reverend Samuel Wix, A. M. F. R. and A. S. S. to *unite* the Roman and Anglican Churches, in the indissoluble bonds of family alliance, for the openly avowed purpose of putting down the British and Foreign Bible Society, and of exterminating all protestant dissenters. A letter, in reply to Mr. Wix, by Dr. Burgess, bishop of St. David's, printed at Carmarthen, in 1820, will show, that *all* the episcopal bench in England is *not yet* tainted with the leprosy of formalism ; which, in effect, reduces Christianity to virtual popery, by divesting it of all spirituality.

When a shyness had been excited between Southampton and Clarendon, in consequence of Clarendon's shifting sides, and co-operating with Charles's state bishops, to drive all puritans out of the Anglican Church, the prelates adopted the following mode of *spiritual* reasoning, to induce Charles to break his royal word ; to falsify his own printed declaration, and to entail the curse of intolerance, of persecution, and of impiety, upon the British empire.

These worthy, conscientious bishops said, it was better to have a schism *out* of the church, than *in* it ; that the half conformity of the puritans, before the civil war, had set up a faction in every city and town, between the lecturers and incumbents, which was hostile to the government of church and state ; that the king ought to have none *to serve him*, Charles, in the church, but men firmly tied to *his* interests, by subscriptions, and oaths, and pains, and penalties ; that, though the king *now* had a parliament, ready to go *all lengths* at his bidding, he could *not* expect such success always ; and *therefore*, it was best to make sure work at this time ; and instead of bringing in the sectaries, to seek the most effectual means of *casting them out*, and introducing a *new* set of men into the church.

To this truly scriptural mode of episcopal argumentation, Charles professed to agree ; because he

wanted to use the unchristian violence of these protestant prelates, for an instrument to introduce *popery* into England, as the state religion.

The court of Charles, and his queen, and James, thought, that a *general* toleration would best promote this scheme of restoring popery to its pristine domination; and nothing, they supposed, could procure an open toleration for popery, but driving great bodies of men *out* of the English protestant episcopal church, and harassing them with severe laws; which would force *them* to ask for a toleration; and the government intended to make it large enough to include, and cover, and protect the papists. Whence the papists openly avowed, that *they* would oppose all plans for a *comprehension* that might reconcile all protestants together, and would labour to excite the high churchmen against the puritans; which the formalists called zeal for the church of England.

The papists, however, at the same time, spoke of a general toleration, as necessary for the peace and quiet of the nation, and for the encouragement of trade. The duke of York declared himself a violent enemy to comprehension, and as zealous for toleration; so natural is it for papists and protestant episcopal formalists to unite together, to crush all evangelical religion. Herod and Pilate were reconciled, when the Lord of life was to be crucified.

Charles, being determined to make the terms of *conformity*, at least, as rigorous as they were under his father, and the execrable Laud, affected an appearance of moderation, until a new parliament should disclose the strength of the respective political parties. Wherefore, in furtherance of this royal and prelatical scheme of hypocrisy and fraud, after the declaration was published, a commission was granted to twelve, with nine assistants on each side, to meet at the *Savoy*, and consider the means of *uniting* both.

At their first meeting, Sheldon said, the churchmen had *not* desired the meeting; for *they* were sa-

tisfied with the legal establishment; and the puritans must give, *in writing*, all their proposed alterations, at once; whereas, an amicable conference had been promised. Papers were given in; the presbyterians moving, that archbishop Usher's reduction should be the basis on which to treat; that bishops should *not* govern their diocese by their own single authority, nor depute it to *lay* officers in their courts; but in ordination and jurisdiction, should use the counsel and the concurrence of the presbyters. They excepted to the responses in the liturgy; to the lessons taken from the Apocrypha; to the use of psalms translated from the *vulgate*, instead of the new English version; to those parts of the office of baptism, importing the inward regeneration of *all* the baptized; to a compelled posture at the Lord's Supper; to the use of the surplice, the cross in baptism, of godfathers, as sponsors, and of holy-days. They likewise offered a liturgy, newly drawn by Richard Baxter.

Sheldon availed himself of the multitude of their objections; and above all, of their offering a new liturgy; and a loud outcry was raised against them, as persons whom nothing could satisfy. The whole matter was, at length, reduced to one point; namely, if it were lawful to determine the certain use of things indifferent in the worship of God? Upon this question they disputed some days; Baxter being the chief speaker for the puritans. Gunning, afterwards bishop of Chichester, and then of Ely, for the churchmen.

Baxter's character is well known. Mr. Wilberforce, in his "Practical View," ranks him among the highest names of the Anglican Church; ranks him with Davenant, Jewell, Hall, Reynolds, Beveridge, Hooker, Andrews, Leighton, Usher, Hopkins, and a host of other great evangelical divines. "I must," says this eminent statesman, patriot, philanthropist and Christian, "class among the brightest ornaments of the church of England, this great man, who, with his

brethren, was so shamefully ejected from the church in 1662, *in violation* of the royal word, as well as of the clear principles of justice."

Gunning is described by Burnet, as a man of great reading, and special subtlety of arguing; using all the arts of sophistry on all occasions, as confidently as if they had been sound reasoning; and earnest for *reconciling* the Roman and Anglican Churches, to effect which he laboured to clear popery from the charge of idolatry. He wanted the church of England to pray for the dead; to use oil in unction; and to adopt many other parts of the popish ritual.

The dispute between this protestant papist and Baxter consumed the whole time allotted for the commission; and nothing was settled. The state bishops insisted upon the existing laws; and charged the puritans with *schism*, for having excepted to the discipline of the established church. The puritans were industriously represented as enemies to all order; much heat and personal animosity were exhibited at the Savoy conference; and when Baxter said that such things would offend many good men in the *nation*, Stearn, archbishop of York, observed, that the puritan would not say *kingdom*, but *nation*, because he would not acknowledge a king. A return sufficiently vile for the zeal, which the presbyterians had shown, in bringing about the restoration of Charles.

This conference only increased the mutual dislike of both parties. The presbyterians complained to the king, who disregarded them; and the state bishops laboured to render the terms of conformity *much stricter* than they were under Laud. Whence it was resolved to subject lecturers, as well as incumbents, to oaths and subscriptions; and compel *all* persons to subscribe an unfeigned assent and consent to all and every particular contained in the common prayer book; the act requiring an assent and consent to the *use* of all things in that book. Another subscription was enacted, in relation to the league and covenant, declaring it unlawful, upon *any*

grounds, to take arms against the king, and that the covenant was, in itself, an unlawful oath.

This blow was levelled against the old men, who had taken the covenant; an oath, which Charles himself had swallowed, and as thoroughly digested as he did every other oath.

Formerly, those who came to England from other churches, were *not* required to be ordained there; a community of faith being considered as giving a common validity to each other's ordinances. But, by the act of uniformity, all clerks, not episcopally ordained, were rendered incapable of holding any ecclesiastical benefice in the church of England. The bishops made some alterations in the liturgy; adding new collects; as, the prayer for all conditions of men, and the general thanksgiving. They were base enough, in the collect for the parliament, to style Charles their *most religious* king: a novel epithet, which occasioned much indecent mirth in that infamous and impious monarch's own court.

One addition of importance, however, was made by Gawden's men; namely, a declaration, explaining *why* they knelt at the sacrament; inserted in Edward's, but omitted in Elizabeth's liturgy. The papists were highly offended at this express declaration against the *real* presence; and the duke of York asked Sheldon *how* they came to declare against that doctrine? Sheldon answered, "ask Gawden, who is a bishop of *your own* making;" for Charles had, himself, ordered Gawden to be made bishop.

The convocation, also, added some new holy-days, to wit: Saint Barnabas, and the conversion of Paul; took in *more* lessons from the Apocrypha, particularly, Bel and the Dragon; and penned two new offices; the thirtieth of January, called king Charles the martyr, in which a blasphemous comparison is made between the merits of Christ, and of the decapitated monarch; and the twenty-ninth of May, the auspicious day of Charles the second's gracious

birth, and most felicitous restoration. These offices were drawn up by Sancroft, in a very high strain of formal flattery.

The choice and returns of the members of the convocation were so managed, as to make them all move, like so many puppets, directed by Sheldon and Morley. When they had finished, they offered their alterations to the king, who sent them to the commons, where the act of uniformity was prepared by Keeling, afterwards chief justice. When the act was brought into the house, many apprehended the *evil* consequences of its severity; whereupon, the house was filled with prodigious rumours of presbyterian plots in several counties. Many were taken up on these reports; none were tried; and all were liberated, as soon as the *pious fraud* had effected its purpose; to wit,—the passing of this most execrable statute; which, after all the flagitious efforts of Charles, and his state bishops, passed only by a lean majority.

By the provisions of this ever-memorable act, *all* who did *not* conform to the liturgy by the 24th of August, Bartholomew day, in 1662, were deprived of all ecclesiastical benefices in the state church; leaving *no* discretionary power with the king to exercise the prerogative of mercy in its execution; and making *no* provision for the maintenance of those thus deprived of all the means of subsistence. A severity this, of Charles's established bishops, *not* practised, even by the arbitrary Elizabeth, in enacting her liturgy; nor by the usurping Cromwell, in ejecting the episcopal clergy. For, in *both* these instances, one-fifth of the benefice was by law reserved for the maintenance of the ejected clerks.

In many parts of England, the ministers could *not* procure the common prayer book, before the day on which they were to swear to it, or lose their livings. Honest men called to mind the Bartholomew, held in Paris, ninety years before, in 1572; on which day a *popish* government, headed by its king, Charles,

who fired repeatedly, with his own hand, upon the French people, from the windows of the palace, butchered *thirty thousand* protestants; massacreing all the Huguenots they could find and master, without distinction of age or sex.

The prayer book, with the new corrections, which they were to subscribe, was printed so slowly, and with so many *purposed* delays, that *very few* copies were ready, when that fatal day came; whence, many ministers, well affected to the church, but making conscience, as well they might, (whatever formalists may think of an oath, when weighed in the scales against a church living,) of swearing to a book they had *not* seen, left their benefices on that very account. Many hastened to London, on purpose to see it; but the great body of the *established* church clergy swore point blank, their assent and consent to a book which they had never seen. The presbyterians had many meetings about conformity; Reynolds accepted the bishopric of Norwich; but Calamy and Baxter refused the sees of Litchfield and Hereford.

Full *two thousand* ministers were ejected, leaving in the established church its entire compliment of formal, secular, irreligious clergy; an order of men, which generally, nay, *necessarily*, flourishes, in proportion to the intimate connexion between secular and ecclesiastical government; an order of men, which, certainly, from the day of St. Bartholomew, in 1662, to the present hour, has constituted a *fearful majority* of bishops, priests, and deacons, in the Anglican Church.

Mr. Locke styles these ejected ministers, learned, pious, orthodox divines; and without a peradventure, their superiors in piety, talent, learning, and integrity, the world has never seen; as abundantly appears from their writings, life, and conversation. A contemporary churchman, but *not* a formalist, says, "I am glad so many have chosen suffering, rather than conformity to the establishment; for had

they complied, the world would have thought there was *nothing* in religion. But *now* they have a striking proof that *some* are sincere in their profession. They have suffered the loss of all things; is it for mere honour, *not* conscience or religion? have they so little wit, as not to know what is best, good livings or nasty prisons? do they hate their wives and children? They declare, they *cannot* conform; who should know best, they, or we?"

Richard Baxter told bishop Burnet, that if Charles had faithfully kept the terms of his own declaration, *not more* than three hundred ministers would have been deprived. Scarcely any of the high church episcopalians disapproved of this atrocious act, which cast out so many excellent men to penury, and ignominy and suffering; which heaped upon them so much spiteful usage and persecution; which *compelled* them to form separate congregations, and to lay the basis of an *ever widening* dissent from the English church establishment; whose own formalism, unless it be crushed or checked, will, eventually, draw down the ruin of that establishment, without the concurrent aid of hostility from any other quarter.

The blame of all this iniquity fell heavily on Sheldon, whom Charles had made archbishop of Canterbury, for having *no* sense of religion. Clarendon, also, was charged with fraud, in entertaining the presbyterians with fair promises, while he was aiding the infamous scheme of the state bishops; contrary to his own better judgment, as well as in direct violation of all the principles of integrity.

From this time, the name of puritan was exchanged for that of nonconformist; including presbyterians, independents, baptists, and quakers. They petitioned Charles for an indulgence; which he was inclined to grant, in order to cover the *papists*; but the parliament gave him money, to supply his extravagance, and promote his profligacy; in consequence of which, the nonconformists were left to the tender mercies of formal high churchmen, who generally

have about as much mercy, as there is milk in a male tiger.

Some of the ejected ministers practised *occasional* conformity, by attending the established church, and joining in its worship; although they could not, conscientiously, swear assent to every thing in the prayer book. Dr. Calamy being present at his late parish of Aldermanbury, London, was invited to preach, as the person expected to officiate did not come. For complying with this request, he was cast into Newgate.

When the convocation had new modelled the prayer book, it was proposed, under a clause in Charles's *license*, to consider the *canons* of the church. They had the power then to reform many abuses; particularly, to remedy those springing from the poor maintenance of inferior incumbents. Almost all the church leases in England had fallen in; and the fines for their renewal amounted to a *million and a half* sterling, about seven millions of dollars; the *whole* of which was pocketed by the conforming state clergy; not a farthing being applied to augment the poorer livings. In some sees, forty or fifty thousand pounds sterling, beside the annual income, fell to the bishop's share. In this, Clarendon was charged, as being a greater friend to the existing state bishops, than to the Anglican Church itself.

The grasping these immense fines by the bishops, afforded a laudable example to all the lower established dignitaries, which they scrupulously followed; and took much better care of themselves, than the interests, whether spiritual or temporal, of the church. With this vast accession of wealth, luxury, high living, and dissipation, broke in upon the state clergy; many of whom made large purchases of land, and left great estates. The elder clerks, not merely the bishops, for English bishops, generally speaking, have never been guilty of frequent preaching, of any kind, but smaller ecclesiastics, also, became lazy, and negligent of all the true concerns of the church; they

left preaching and writing to others; and gave themselves up to ease, and sloth, and bodily indulgence.

So few were the exceptions to such unprincipled conduct, that bishop Burnet says, if a new set of men of another stamp had not appeared, the established English church would have, altogether, lost her esteem in the eyes of the nation.

These men, according to Burnet, were, for the most part, formed under the celebrated divines, Whitchcot, Cudworth, Wilkins, More and Worthington. Their main object was to establish men in the great principles of religion, against the tide of *atheism* and impiety, which was flowing all over the country, from the profligacy of the king and his court, and from the formalism of the established clergy. Whitchcot used his whole influence to protect good men of *all* persuasions; was a great advocate for liberty of conscience; laboured to amend the dry, systematic preaching of his day; set his students to peruse the ancient philosophers, chiefly Plato, Tully, and Plotin; and taught them to consider Christianity as a religion sent from God, to elevate and sweeten human nature. Cudworth pushed the same scheme, with vast genius and immense learning.

Wilkins married Cromwell's sister, and laboured to divert men from party violence, narrow notions, superstitious conceits, and fierceness about opinions. More was an openhearted Christian philosopher, who laboured strenuously against the atheism, then gaining ground, and much forwarded by Hobbes, whose Leviathan had taught the materiality of the soul; that interest and fear are the chief principles of human society; that all morality consists in following our own private will or advantage; that religion has *no other* foundation than the law of the land; which law consists in the absolute will of the government, whether royal or republican.

These abominable notions found willing recipients in Charles himself, in his courtiers generally, and in too many throughout the nation at large.

To counteract these impieties, the Cambridge divines laboured to set forth the principles of religion and morality, on *philosophical* grounds. Would it not have been better to preach the pure, unsophisticated Gospel? seeing that the experience of all time shows, that the infidelity, natural to the human heart, and fostered by intercourse with the world, gives way to the foolishness of faithful preaching, when it only hardens its front against all the efforts of the unassisted wisdom and science of philosophy; and seeing also, that infidelity was never more rife in England, than during the whole period when her philosophical divines, from Cudworth to Butler, were employed in buttressing up the *out-works* of revelation; and seeing, likewise, that infidelity has been beaten down in England to a greater extent, during the last fifty years, since *evangelical* preaching has found its way into the established church, as well as pervaded the worship of the orthodox dissenters, than it was from the Bartholomew persecution, in 1662, down to the middle of the reign of George the second; an interval of nearly an entire century.

The prevalence of formalism in *any* church, but more especially in a national establishment, of whatever persuasion, denomination, or sect, is a broad, and deep, and perennial fountain of *infidelity*, and its inseparable adjuncts, immorality and profligacy.

These English divines, however, and those trained by them, studied to examine further into the "*nature of things*," than other men; they declared alike against superstition and fanaticism; they were warmly attached to the constitution of the Anglican Church, and her liturgy; but did *not* think it unlawful to live under *another* form of ecclesiastical government or worship. They wished more moderation to be shown to nonconformists and dissenters; for which spirit of Christian tolerance, the fiercer episcopal formalists fastened upon them the appellation of *latitudinarians*; and stigmatized them as enemies to "*the church*."

Doubtless, their keeping up a friendly intercourse

with those who differed from them in opinion, as to ecclesiastical matters, and allowing a liberal range in philosophy and divinity, would be peculiarly offensive to all who rank churchmanship *higher* than Christianity. Such persons, bearing a close intellectual resemblance to the Austrian emperor, as exhibited in his own precious declaration to the Laybach professors, in 1821. This sapient, royal formalist referred the academicians to the times that are past; "stick to what is old," quoth this imperial feeder of tame rabbits, "whatever is old, is good; I want *not learned* men, but good subjects."

This is the veritable language of formalism, both in church and state; blind, passive obedience, *not* a reasonable service, is required, alike by the formal bishop, and the secular despot. The emperor of Austria has manifested his undissembled hostility to piety and learning, by a still more recent measure; namely, the expulsion of all protestant teachers from his dominions, and consigning the *whole* education of the empire to the care and tuition of the most holy order of the *Jesuits*. This is, indeed, a bold attempt to put the intellectual clock of Europe back, one thousand years; and to veil the nineteenth in the darkness of the ninth century. But the attempt must fail; there is too much light in other parts of the world, to prevent an occasional ray from now and then piercing, even into the thick gloom of Austria.

These divines read Episcopius much; but were strenuous assailants of popery; whence the papists, who are generally the stoutest of all possible formalists, branded them as atheists, and deists, and Socinians. And to prove this charge, the Romanists themselves occupied the ground of *atheism*, by affirming, that there is *no other* certain proof of Christianity, than the authority of the Roman church; thereby showing their preference of atheists to protestants; which is the very essence of bigoted and sectarian formalism. The papists joined forces with Hobbes and his followers, so far as to publish books,

declaring, that the truth of Christianity rests *entirely* upon the authority of their infallible church. Which proves, that they had rather men would become atheists, if they will not turn papists, than believe the revelation of God, on the testimony of his own word; or on any other ground, besides that of papal infallibility.

The most eminent of those, who were formed under these great divines, were Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Patrick. Tillotson was esteemed the best preacher of his age; was a decided enemy to popery, and persecution, and atheism; and was the object of perpetual abuse and calumny to the formal high churchmen, in the establishment. Stillingfleet was a much more learned man. While yet young, he wrote his *Irenicum*; a work of great learning and moderation; for the express purpose of healing the breaches between churchmen and nonconformists. In it he labours to show, that the apostles had settled the Christian church, in a constitution of bishops, priests, and deacons; but had made *no* perpetual law about it; having only taken it, as they had borrowed many other things, from the customs and practice of the Jewish synagogue; whence he infers, that such a constitution is lawful, because authorized by them; but *not* necessary, since they had made no settled law respecting it.

This book was exceedingly clamoured against, as an attempt against the Anglican Church; but the argument was managed with so much learning and skill, that its enemies never undertook to answer it. Afterwards, when Stillingfleet saw a state mitre in the perspective, he retracted his *Irenicum*; and yielded largely to the humours of those high churchmen, who profess to hold the divine, the *exclusive* right of episcopacy; and consign *all other* religious denominations to an *unconvenanted* contingency.

Stillingfleet also wrote in a most masterly manner against popery and infidelity. Patrick was a great preacher, and a voluminous writer. His comment-

ary on a large portion of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Canticles, both inclusive, is too well known to require remark. He was diligent in the discharge of his clerical functions; but too severe against those who differed from him in opinion. As he grew older, however, he became more moderate.

To these, bishop Burnet adds Lloyd; an Oxford student, bred by bishop Wilkins. He was more learned than any of them; a great Greek and Latin critic, chiefly in the Scriptures; and was supposed to have read and digested more than any divine of his age; yet never neglected his pastoral care, in the parish of St. Martin's, the largest cure in England; which he discharged with a zeal and application that cast a deep reproach upon the general remissness and negligence of the established clergy.

These men contributed much to improve the style of preaching in the English church; which, at that time, was grievously debased by pedantry; by a large medley of quotations from the Greek and Latin fathers, and from ancient heathens; by a long opening of the text, with a concordance of every word in it, and a setting forth of all their different expositions, with the grounds thereof, and an exhibition of some controversial points; all wound up in a most lame and impotent conclusion, of a very short, very imperfect, very general, very vague application to the consciences and circumstances of the congregation.

For this mode of sermonizing, in itself, long and heavy, flat and low, patched and piebald with many-coloured rags of different tongues; was substituted a short paraphrase of the text, an exposition of real difficulties, an avoidance of all unnecessary shows of learning, an ample opening and explanation of the subject matter; and, on the whole, so instructive a course of preaching, as not only to secure a numerous audience, but also to raise the reputation of, and to soften the prejudices against, the established church; at a time when religion exceedingly languished in England, and the church-

men, generally, were much more intent on flattering an iniquitous government, on grasping ecclesiastical preferment, and on persecuting the nonconformists, than on preaching the Gospel in its simple purity; and faithfully discharging their pastoral duty towards the unhappy flocks committed to their spiritual care.

Charles's cabinet council debated much, if the Bartholomew act should be punctually executed. Some moved to delay its execution to the next session of parliament; others, that, in its execution, some eminent men might be suffered to preach on, till they died, placing curates in their churches, to read the prayer book. The earl of Manchester laid all these things before Charles; but Sheldon, like another Laud, snuffing the scent of human blood, *pressed* the prompt and rigorous execution of the law; promising that *he* would fill all the forsaken pulpits in London, with *better* men than their present incumbents.

The ejected ministers cast themselves upon the providence of God for support, rather than belie their consciences; which obtained the respect and esteem of all honest men; while the established, formal clergy, now wallowing in wealth, and luxury, and dissipation, were as much despised and execrated. Verily, these, and all other persecuting formalists, *shall* have their reward.

After Bartholomew's day, the dissenters, seeing the merciless cruelty of Charles, and his state bishops, consulted how they should act: many proposed to go to Holland, and settle there with their ministers; while some preferred New-England. On this, the earl of Bristol drew to his house a meeting of the chief *papists* in London, to whom, after an oath of secrecy, he said, that *now* was the time to begin to bring in popery, by means of a toleration, wide enough to cover both the nonconformists and themselves. Lord Aubigny seconded the motion, saying, it was so visibly England's interest to retain

within her own bosom so large a body of trading men, that it would be popular for the papists to *seem* zealous for it.

Charles approved of the scheme, and in December 1662, put forth a declaration, expressing *his own* aversion from all severities on account of religion; and, more especially, his dislike to all sanguinary laws; and holding out hopes, both to papists and nonconformists, that *he* would so temper the severity of the laws, as to render *all* his subjects easy. The nonconformists, perceiving the rank odour of popery in the royal hypocrite's declaration, received it coldly; but the papists began forthwith to prepare a plan for *their own* toleration; which was not easy, because some were willing to take the oath of allegiance, which renounces the pope's *deposing* power; a deadly sin, for which the Internuncio, at Brussels, denounced them as traitors against the holy see.

Bishop Burnet says, that, at this time, the papists feared nothing so much as a *union* of churchmen and presbyterians, which would have been fatal to the cause of popery in England. The papists had two maxims, from which they never departed; one, to *divide* the English protestants; the other, to keep themselves *united*; and, either to procure an indiscriminate toleration, or a general persecution. This popish scheme the established church formalists promoted, in order to crush all evangelism among the state clergy.

In the year 1663, Charles and his bishops had the *conventicle* act passed, empowering justices of the peace to convict offenders, without the intervention of a jury; a manifest breach of the English constitution; if England could be said to have any constitution, while labouring under the execrable dynasty of the Stuarts. Any meeting for religious worship, at which *five* more than the family were present, was declared a conventicle. And every one above sixteen, present at it, was to lie three months in prison, or pay five pounds, for the first offence; the penalty

for the second offence was six months' imprisonment, or a fine of twenty pounds; for the third, banishment to any plantation, except New-England or Virginia; and if they returned from banishment, they were to suffer death.

The oath of a single informer was sufficient to enable a justice of the peace to inflict all this severity; and while many of the best men in England, best in piety, talents, learning and integrity, crowded the gaols of that country, the basest of the human race rioted in vulgar debauchery, by informing for the sake of the reward.

But no measure of vindictive cruelty could satisfy the formal state clergy, who, in 1665, induced the parliament to pass a law, called the *five mile act*; prohibiting the nonconformists from approaching any corporate town, unless they would take an oath of passive obedience and nonresistance. They were also forbidden to keep school, or take boarders; and thus were deliberately consigned, by men who passed for protestant clergymen, to actual starvation, because they feared God rather than man; and lived by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The *cause* of this act was as infamous as its execution was cruel. When London was visited with the plague, the great body of the established clergy ran away, and left their flocks to perish. The nonconformists went into the empty pulpits, and preached the Gospel to a people, deserted by their own parish priests, under the most awful of all human calamities. This was too heinous a crime to pass unpunished; and a bill was brought into the house of commons, the court and parliament then sitting at Oxford, requiring all the *silenced* ministers to take an oath, declaring it *not* lawful, on *any* pretence, to take arms against the king, or any *commission* by him; and that they would *not*, at any time, endeavour an alteration in the government of church and state.

On refusal to swear, they were not to come within *five miles* of any city, or parliament borough, or the

church which they had formerly served. This infamous bill was opposed in the house of lords by the earl of Southampton, who said, that *he* could *not* himself take such an oath; for, as things were managed, *he* might see cause to endeavour an alteration. Of all the state bishops, Sheldon and Ward were the most eager to pass this act; in which they were joined by all the patrons of *popery*; their constant maxim being to reduce the dissenters to such a desperate state, that they should be compelled to ask for a toleration on Charles's own terms.

Nay, the established clergy faction would not suffer the word "*legally*," to be added to "commissioned by the king." The act was passed, and plunged the nonconformists into great extremities. They could not, conscientiously, take such an oath; nor did they know how to locate themselves in any part of England, under the terms of the law, which deprived many of them of all the means of their subsistence.

The nonconformists were harassed by fine and imprisonment, without cessation, until the year 1667, when the ill success of his impolitic and iniquitous war against the Dutch, induced Charles to endeavour to recover some portion of the attachment of the English people, which his unprincipled and arbitrary conduct had deservedly destroyed. He knew, full well, that slackening the execution of the laws against dissenters would please the city of London, and the trading part of the nation generally; *wherefore*, at intervals, the persecution was somewhat mitigated.

Burnet says, that Charles had such a command of himself, that when *his interest* led him to serve *any* end, or to court *any* sort of men, he did it so dexterously and with such an air of sincerity, that, till men were well practised in him, he was apt to impose on them. He *seemed* now to be so hearty in the cause of moderation and comprehension, that sir Orlando Bridgman and bishop Wilkins believed him to be in earnest; although there was nothing in which his *popish* counsels were more fixed, than to oppose all such plans.

But Charles saw that it was necessary to recover the good opinion of the English people ; and as the churchmen were rather shy of him, upon the disgrace of their great patron, Clarendon, he resolved to show some semblance of favour to the dissenters ; both to soften them, and force the churchmen back to their usual dependence upon, and sycophancy towards him.

He vented his anger at the state bishops, in the council board ; and, on complaints from them, of disorders and conventicles, said, and said most truly, that the *established* clergy were to blame ; for if *they* had lived well, and gone about their parishes, and taken pains to convince the nonconformists, the nation might have been settled ; but *they* thought of nothing, but to get good benefices, and to keep a good table. Burnet says, that in a conversation with Charles, in his closet, he was struck to hear a prince of *his* course of life, *so much* disgusted at the ambition, the covetousness, and scandals of the established clergy.

The king said, “ if the clergy had done *their* part, it had been easy to settle the nonconformists ; but *they* will do nothing, and push *me* on to do every thing. I had a chaplain, an honest man, but a great blockhead, to whom I gave a living in Suffolk, full of that sort of people ; he went about among them from house to house, though I cannot imagine what he could say to them, for he was a very silly fellow ; but I believe his *nonsense* suited theirs, for he brought them all to the church ; and in reward of his diligence, I have given him a bishopric in Ireland.”

If *such* had been always the grounds on which Charles made bishops, the Bartholomew, conventicle and five mile acts, would never have stamped with indelible infamy the British statute book. And, although the royal profligate might deem piety nonsense, and an honest man a blockhead ; it would have been infinitely better for old England, in all her national, social, domestic, and individual interests, if her established clergy had lured her people to

church, by the *same* means, which this conscientious chaplain, rector, and bishop used; instead of first filling the country with nonconformists, by their own fraudulent and iniquitous measures; and then persecuting by fines, by imprisonment, and by exile, those whom they had *forced* into nonconformity.

And it would be infinitely better for old England *now*, if her government would manufacture bishops out of the same staple that supplied this Irish prelate; instead of promoting men to the episcopate, for their popish, their pelagian, their formal, their secular views, opinions, character, and conduct.

As Charles complained so loudly of the unprincipled and cruel course of the state bishops, and conforming clergy generally, who increased the number of dissenters by their scandalous behaviour; which the people could not but contrast with that of the ejected ministers; a toleration was proposed by the more moderate divines of the establishment. But this was so violently clamoured against by the high church formalists, that the nonconformists were subjected to a renewed, and a still severer persecution.

Bridgman and Wilkins set on foot a treaty for a *comprehension* of such dissenters as would commune with the established church; and a toleration of the rest. Chief justice Hale, Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Burton, concurred. Bates, Manton and Baxter were called on the side of the presbyterians; and a project was prepared, similar to that promised by Charles, in his declaration, published in 1660, and so flagrantly falsified by the Bartholomew act. All the ultras and formalists cried out, that *the* church was undermined and betrayed. The more moderate divines answered, that yielding in lesser and indifferent matters would be no reproach, but an honour to the church. The Apostles complied with many Jewish observances; and the African church offered much to the Donatists. The progress of *popery* and *atheism*, in England, alarmed all the wise and good; and taught them that all which could be done,

without sin, should be done to heal protestant divisions.

A paper war fanned the flames on both sides. Ralph Willis, the cobbler of Gloucester, published an account of the scandalous lives of many of the established clergy. On the other side, books were written to expose the presbyterians; as having false notions in religion, leading to antinomianism, and a dissolution of morals, under pretence of being justified by *faith* only; which, be it remembered, the eleventh article of the Anglican Church itself expressly asserts to be “a most wholesome doctrine.” The three volumes of the “Friendly Debate” were also levelled at the nonconformists.

But the most virulent champion of state episcopacy was Parker, made bishop of Oxford, by James; a man, described by Burnet as full of satirical vivacity, of considerable learning, of no judgment, of as little virtue, and, as to religion, *rather impious*. Indeed, he did not scruple to declare, publicly, “that it was more necessary to set a severe government over men’s consciences and religious persuasions, than over their *vices* and *immoralities*. Goodly qualifications these, for a protestant prelate!

Parker’s lucubrations were answered by Andrew Marvel, the liveliest droll of the age, whose wit effected more than all the learning of Dr. Owen’s grave replies. It was written in so entertaining a manner, that, from the king and his mistresses down to the lowest orders, “the Rehearsal transposed” was read with delight; and chagrined and humbled Parker, and the whole faction of formal, clerical persecutors. But whatever advantages the friends of comprehension and toleration might have, on the side of wisdom, wit, and justice, the high churchmen had such influence in a *packed* house of commons, as to induce those inflexible guardians of religious and civil liberty, to pass a most extraordinary vote, that *no* bill for such a purpose should be received in parliament.

The court, says Burnet, delivered itself up to vice; and the house of commons lost all respect in the nation, because they still gave all the money which Charles asked, to meet the continual expenditure of his extravagance and profligacy. When an inquiry was made into the expenses of the Dutch war, great part of which money Charles had converted to his own use, the chief men, who promoted this inquiry, were *taken off*, the cant phrase then used for bribery, in which the court made such progress, that it was thought the king would never part with a parliament, in which *every* man's price was known; for as any one rose in the house, he *raised* his price.

In the course of this inquiry, the carelessness, luxury, and dissipation of the court, were so much exposed, that Charles was greatly exasperated; and lent a willing ear to his sycophants, who magnified *absolute* governments, particularly that of France, and said, how easily *he* could shake off the restraints of law; as Denmark passed, in one day, from an elective to an hereditary and despotic crown. Charles liked the project well, but was too indolent, and too dastardly to attempt its immediate execution; and therefore went on in the common sheep track of Stuart kingcraft, balancing one party against another; occasionally doing popular acts, to get money from his parliament, under pretence of supporting the triple alliance against France and popery.

Some members struggled in vain to oppose this profligate waste of the people's money; and, among the rest, sir John Coventry; who proposed laying a tax on *playhouses*; then the sink of all prostitution and dissoluteness. The court party protested against such a tax, saying, the players were the king's servants, and a part of his pleasure. Coventry asked, whether the king's pleasure did lie among the men, or the women, that acted? Whereupon, Charles, in spite of his brother James's remonstrances to the contrary,

sent some of *his own* guards to waylay Coventry, and set the king's *mark* upon him.

Sands, Obrian, and others, drew their swords on him, as he was entering his lodgings; Coventry seized a flambeau with one hand, and with his sword in the other, defended himself valiantly against his numerous assailants. After wounding some of the guardsmen, he was disarmed by the rest, who *slit his nose open to the bone*: to teach him, they said, to *respect* the king. In this state they left him, and went back to the duke of Monmouth's, where Obrian's arm was dressed.

Such was the condition of *civil* liberty in England, under this precious limb of the Stuart body; nor was *religious* liberty in a better state, under the auspices of this supreme secular head of the established church. During the great fire, which had consumed so large a portion of the city of London, as during the devastations of the plague, the regular national clergy had deserted their flocks; and the nonconformists administered spiritual consolation to the suffering and bereaved people. *Wherefore*, in 1669, when the city was rebuilt, an act was proposed, reviving the former act against conventicles, with some *additional* severities; namely, that in any case of doubt concerning the meaning of any part of the law, it should be determined in the sense *most hostile* to conventicles; and that every justice should be heavily fined, if he did not execute the law, upon information given.

Upon this, many justices resigned their commissions, rather than be the instruments of such ecclesiastical tyranny. No jury trial was allowed; but the nonconformists were exposed to conviction on the oath of a single informer, who received one-third of the exorbitant fine. This infernal act was so rigorously executed in Starling's mayoralty, that all London was in disorder, and many merchants prepared to remove to Holland, with their industry and trading capital. But

still the informers were *encouraged*, and every where labouring in their regular vocation. Among other dissenters, the quakers, or friends, suffered very severely, and with great firmness and resolution, during this protestant episcopal established church persecution.

The present limits do *not* allow of tracing the foot-tracks of persecution, marked by the course of the Anglican Church, any farther. Her labours, in that part of her calling, during the remainder of the reign of Charles the second, and the reigns of James, of William, of Ann, and of the Brunswick sovereigns, must be reserved for future notice.

It is, however, necessary to observe, that the church of England has *not yet* learned the wisdom, which flows from the mild and tolerant spirit of Christianity, notwithstanding the experience of the iniquity and the evil of persecution, for nearly three centuries. A very few years since, lord Sidmouth brought a bill into the house of peers, the *effect* of which, had it passed into a law, would have been to renew the blessings of the Bartholomew, the conventicle, and the five mile acts. But the English dissenters, of all denominations, uniting together, poured in such a flood of petitions against the bill, as compelled the British government to desist from their proposed crusade against evangelism.

The reverend doctor Coke, an eminent clergyman in the Wesleyan connexion, called upon lord Sidmouth, while this bill was in agitation, and told him, that if it became a law, its first operation would be to send *four thousand* methodist local preachers to gaol. For these men could *not* conscientiously desist from preaching the Gospel, merely because his lordship and the established church wished to *silence* them; as two thousand evangelical ministers had been silenced in the year 1662. But, notwithstanding this plain and intelligible declaration, the sagacious statesman persisted in bringing his project of persecution before the house of lords.

In the year 1811, was made this notable effort to break up the toleration act, and destroy religious liberty in England; by imposing new and intolerable restrictions upon the dissenters. The noble viscount's eloquence was employed in describing the nonconforming preachers, as, "blacksmiths, cobblers, tailors, pedlers, chimney-sweepers, and *what not*." This eloquence was backed by the pious efforts of the formal, high church bishops, who were, however, frightened by, what the primate of Canterbury called "the flood of petitions, which deluged the table of the house of lords." The *lay* peers of England did *their* duty on that day; and by their speeches and votes, in favour of universal religious freedom, not only defeated the noble doctor's attempt to poison piety in the phial of persecution; but actually obtained an enlargement of the privileges of protestant dissenters.

The immediate operation of lord Sidmouth's bill, if enacted into a law, would have been to crowd the gaols of England with four thousand methodist preachers, and a still greater number of independent, or congregational, clergy; for the crime of preaching the pure Gospel. Leaving at large Socinians, formalists, deists, and atheists, to edify a Christian community. But the event of this flagitious effort proved, that the ecclesiastical tyranny of the seventeenth, *cannot* be revived in the nineteenth century.

England seems never to have been able to divest herself of the notion of the *necessity* of a national, or state church, which must absorb all religion in its own established gulf; and to whose dominion all must bend. During the reign of the Tudors, particularly of Elizabeth, the English government made a wide difference in its treatment of those, who were attached to a particular form of church order, at home, or abroad. Thus, in England, nonepiscopalians were fined, imprisoned, pilloried, banished, butchered, *at the same time* that aid was afforded to

the Huguenots in France, and to the Dutch insurgents against Spain.

In justice to the Stuarts, it must be acknowledged that *not* one of them ever aided a foreign protestant; they were all too much occupied in persecuting English and Scottish protestants at home. And when the presbyterians gained the ascendancy, during the latter part of the reign of Charles, and during the protectorate of Cromwell, they endeavoured to force all England into a presbyterian state church; while they were disposed to be kindly towards the congregationalists of New-England. At all times, however, under a national church, whether episcopalian, or presbyterian, or independent, the established clergy, when they fail to convince others by the force of their oral or written arguments, are very desirous of calling in to their aid those two great doctors in theology, those resident graduates of the scourge and of the gallows; the beadle and the hangman.

If a national church establishment *be* necessary to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in a country, *how* is it, that during the full influence of the English church establishment, from its restoration, under Charles the second, to the middle of the reign of George the second, *infidelity* was so much diffused in England; and that its progress was never effectually checked, until after the *revivals* of religion by Whitfield and Wesley, and their followers; which revivals, the Anglican national church establishment *have always* laboured, and *do now* labour, to the extreme extent of their power, to oppose and to destroy?

Mr. Southey himself, a very strenuous and a very able advocate for the established church of England, admits, in his life of John Wesley, that the constitution of that clerical establishment has a natural tendency to produce irreligious, formal ministers; who are precisely the sort of clergy best calculated

to promote infidelity among the laity, by divesting Christianity of all its spiritual attractions and principles. The Anglican Church offers an easy, respectable provision for the younger sons of the nobility and gentry, who take up the clerical, as they would any *secular* calling; and, being settled upon family livings, inflict deep and deadly wounds upon the character of the establishment; and offer grievous violence to the religious feelings of the nation.

Their inability, or disinclination for the sacred office, into which they are thrust for a morsel of bread, is a fearful thing for themselves, and a horrible calamity for the people committed to their unfaithful charge. Nay, even when the motives for entering the established church are *not* thus palpably gross, the choice is far more frequently made, from motives of convenience and worldly circumstances, than from a deliberate and conscientious determination of the will and judgment.

Influence in an endowed school, or a prospect of promotion at college, destines boys for holy orders; with little reference to their talents and disposition; nay, sometimes, *because* they are thought too dull and incompetent for *any other* vocation. And when no unfitness exists, the destination is usually regarded with ominous indifference; as if it might be entered upon with as little forethought and feeling, as any secular profession or branch of trade; as if *all* the heart, and *all* the soul, and *all* the strength of man, were not required for the due performance of its duties; and a minister of the Gospel were responsible for nothing more than what the rubric enjoins.

In addition to the deadly formalism of the English state clergy, a speculative *infidelity* was imported from France, where it originated in a corrupt established, or national, church, and a most infamously licentious literature. In *this* school, some of the leading statesmen of Charles the second, together with their royal master, had been trained. Of course

the people of England, generally, were *not* instructed in the pure principles of evangelical faith; and knew little, if any thing, more of religion than its exterior forms. They had been papists; were then protestants; but never had been Christians.

The Reformation had taken away some of the outward ceremonies, to which they were attached, and substituted nothing in their stead. To the mass of the people, the Bible was a sealed book; because the system of *general* education, desired by the fathers of the Anglican Church, and intended by Edward the sixth, had never been provided. Nevertheless, the Reformation produced great national blessings. It delivered England from spiritual bondage; it set her intellect free; it rid her of the gross idolatry, and abominable impostures of the popish church, and of those infamous practices, which stifle religion, and corrupt national morals.

Yet too little care was taken to teach the *educated* classes the principles of pure religion; and the greater part of the nation were altogether uneducated. Christians, only by the mere ceremony of *baptism*; and being in a state of heathen, or worse than heathen, ignorance. In truth, they never had been converted; at first, one idolatry was substituted for another; and, when the popish idolatry was expelled, the people became only *nominal* Christians; they were left as ignorant of *real* Christianity, as they were found, in succession, by popery and by protestantism.

With the rise and progress of formalism in the established church of England, has been intimately connected the growth of *infidelity* and immorality in that country. Much detail on this subject is not necessary; it will be sufficient to refer generally to writers of various religious denominations, and to state a few particulars, showing the prevalence of formalism and infidelity in England, from the time of Charles the second, to the present hour.

Bishop Burnet's "History of his own Time" affords an ample view of the formalism and irreligion of the Anglican Church establishment, under the Stuart dynasty; together with her horrible persecutions of all those who dissented from her, whether in doctrine or in discipline. Indeed, her bloody cruelty was more fiercely directed against the dissidents in church government, than against those who differed from her in religious opinions. The puritans did *not* separate from the English church, on account of her doctrines, for in them they agreed with her; but on account of the burdensome ceremonies, and popish superstitions imposed by her; and above all, by the abominable *book of sports*, so foolishly promulgated by James and Charles; and so mercilessly enforced by Laud.

The reader may form *some* notion of the state of religion and morals in England, in those awful times, under the full and triumphant auspices of the established church, by a single fact; showing the extremities and devices, to which pious persons were driven, in order to worship God *by stealth*; while every species of infidelity and profligacy were *openly* encouraged throughout the whole country.

The reverend Samuel Shaw was ejected from his living, in 1661, about a year *before* the Bartholomew act was published; he being an incumbent, substituted by parliament for a sequestered episcopal clerk; and therefore, on the restoration of Charles, cast out by law, as one whose title was originally void, because illegal. A gentleman says, in reference to this ousted clergyman, "I have known him spend many days, and nights too, in religious exercises, when the times were so dangerous, that it would hazard an imprisonment for a person *not* to be drunk, or in a bawdy-house, or tavern; but to be worshipping God, with five or six people, like minded with himself. I have been sometimes in Mr. Shaw's company, for a whole night together, when we have been obliged to

steal to the place in the dark, stop out the light, and stop in the voice, by clothing, and fast closing the windows, till the first daybreak down a chimney has warned us to be gone. I bless God for such seasons. If some say, it was needless to do so much; I reply, the life of our souls, and eternity, which *only* was minded there, required more."

A careful perusal of the following works will enable the reader to trace the progress of formalism, and irreligion, in the church establishment and people of England, from the time, more especially, of Charles the second, to the revival of religion, in the reign of George the second; and from that revival to the present period, when its evangelical clergy, still a small and unprotected band, are endeavouring, in spite of the frowns and persecution of the secular government, the hierarchy, and ecclesiastical dignitaries, generally, to *restore* that august, and venerable church, to the purity of Scriptural doctrine, established by her first reformers, and by them embodied into her articles, homilies, and liturgy.

On the dissenting side, the account may be traced from the Reformation to the year 1808, in Neale's History of the Puritans; Calamy's Nonconformist's Memorial; and Bogue and Bennet's History of Dissenters. To which add Brooks' Lives of the Puritans, and Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches, containing an appendix on the origin, progress, and present state of Christianity, in Britain. On the church side, may be consulted Middleton's Evangelical Biography; and Grant's Summary of the History of the English Church.

Bishop Stillingfleet, in the epistle dedicatory, and preface to his *Origines Sacrae*, written in the year 1662, two years after the restoration of Charles, and in the same year when the bloody Bartholomew act was got up by Sheldon and his brother prelates, complains of the general prevalence of infidelity, atheism and immorality in England.

In the preface of Dr. Owen's incomparable exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews, this subject is examined at greater length. In stating the reasons why Dr. Owen felt himself called upon to enforce the duty of remembering the *Sabbath* day, to keep it holy, it is said, that the personal profligacy of Charles had created a most profligate court; and too many of the people followed this pernicious and perilous example. An immoral man never wishes to contemplate the *consequences* of his conduct. He hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. The light of heaven, then, must *not*, by any means, disturb the king's dream of voluptuous delight. Pure and undefiled religion is banished from the palace. Prophecy not again any more at Bethel; for it is the king's chapel, and it is the king's court.

But though the unwelcome voice of pure religion may be heard no more at all in it; yet the recollections of religion may still haunt the mind. Fear must, therefore, if possible, be excluded, as well [as] grace and truth. To accomplish this, intoxicating pleasures are multiplied. The moral necessities of the court call loudly for carousals, and for masquerades, for buffoons, and for players, for dramatic and burlesque writers; that these, all labouring according to their several vocations, may preoccupy every hour, and depress every rising thought of religion. Accordingly, religious men were systematically ridiculed by this supreme head of the established church, and by his courtiers and prostitutes, then the authorized channels of church patronage. A profession of religion was assumed to be a full proof of hypocrisy; and gravity, and sound speech, which cannot be condemned, were deemed fit subjects for perpetual laughter. Amidst "mimicked statesmen, and their merry king," the just and upright man is laughed to scorn.

But as the hand-writing appeared on the wall, while Belshazzar, despising the God of Israel, was drinking wine before his thousand lords, and prais-

ing the gods of gold, and of silver, and of brass; so, in the midst of all this profane mirth, the heart of the king may soon be made sad; for the anticipations of futurity may intrude; and they *always* damp and darken unprincipled gaiety. Moreover, in the throngest succession of dissipation, there are hours when a man is thrown back upon himself, and *must* think.

Now, for these dark hours in the lives of profligate men, whether monarchs or subjects, whether clerks or laics, *infidelity* engages to make provision; and tries to substantiate its claims to regard. To attend to a train of reasoning, more mental exertion is requisite than profligate men are willing to bestow on the subject of religion. But doubt may be expressed in a few words; objections, misrepresentations, and ludicrous allusions, may be soon made, and are easily remembered. Accordingly, though they could never disprove *any one* of the evidences of Christianity, they could boldly affirm, that the *whole* of this evidence was doubtful, at best; that the Christian doctrines were contradictory and incredible; and that the morality of Scripture was rigid, and inapplicable to the condition of man.

And in proportion as any one possessed the mind which was in Christ Jesus, though they had no evil thing to say of him, they could endeavour to hold him up to scorn, under the reviling epithets of illiberal, or morose, or visionary, or hypocritical, or enthusiastic, or fanatical. They who talked thus, and they who listened, were equally willing to support these assertions; their proof was *not* required. Wit and raillery supplied the place both of principle and argument; and wealth, festivity, and increasing numbers gave spirit to their infidel exertions.

To the patrons of such sentiments, the weekly recurrence of the *Lord's day* was peculiarly unwelcome. This sacred day has ever been an eminent instrument in propagating Christian truth, and in forming Christian character. Of this the puritans had been

fully aware; they had enforced the doctrines of Scripture on this subject, and, under their potent ministrations, a serious impression of the importance of sanctifying the Sabbath had been widely diffused. The *profanation* of this holy day had been *systematically* encouraged by Elizabeth, and James, and Charles, and their state bishops, and established clergy; doubtless, another proof of the necessity of a church establishment, to promote piety, and prevent heathenism.

Of the religious effects which followed the strict observance of this blessed day, *profane* and *infidel* men were also aware. And *they* were anxious to counteract its influence; not merely because they were unwilling to worship God themselves, but also, because they hoped to supplant religious principle, by introducing a neglect of religious ordinances. A serious regard to the duties of *private* worship was now considered as beneath the character of a man of rank; and a contempt of every *public* appearance of devotion, was a distinguishing mark of the king's own peculiar friends and favourites; the dispensers of bishoprics and benefices in the established church.

When Charles himself was in the house of God, he seemed to be afraid, lest it should *not* be sufficiently known that he neither feared God, nor regarded man. And Pharaoh said, *who* is the Lord, that *I* should obey his voice? The king's example was followed by the minions of his pleasures; and the conduct of the court, however infamous, will always be followed by multitudes of the people. Religious men, in every age, have seen cause to lament, that so many neglect the duties of the Sabbath; but at *this* period, when the Anglican Church establishment was in possession of plenary power, and employing that power in persecuting every appearance of piety, the profanation of the Lord's day was open, avowed, audacious, universal. The torrent of *infidelity*, which descended from the throne of Charles, and from the

archiepiscopate of Sheldon, was swollen in its progress through the different gradations of society, and deluged all the land. O my people, they who *lead* thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

The attention of Dr. Owen had been often directed with grief to this *declining* state of religion in England; and he tells us, that to the introduction of a great neglect of the duties of the Sabbath might be ascribed much of the profaneness and impiety which had become so general. While studying the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, he carefully examined the Scripture doctrine respecting the Lord's day. The result of this examination is contained in six exercitations, concerning the name, the origin, the nature, the use, and the continuance of a day of sacred rest; and practical directions for the due observance of this day are subjoined. They were published in 1671, in a detached form, that they might be read more extensively, and without delay. They are now published in the Edinburgh edition, in 1812, of Owen's Exposition of Hebrews.

As might naturally be expected from a formal state church, supported by an infidel, secular government, Charles the second and his established bishops filled Scotland with the blood of her holiest men; covered England with profaneness and profligacy, and laid the axe to the root of all evangelical religion in the national church establishment; and laboured to entail a perpetuity of formalism and ungodliness upon the clergy of the church of England. Pains, penalties, confiscations, imprisonments, tortures, were all put in requisition by this atrocious government of church and state, to prevent the ejected ministers from exercising their most holy functions in a land calling itself Christian.

All vital and experimental religion was decried, ridiculed, calumniated, persecuted; and, so far as the king and his state bishops *could* effect their purpose,

England approximated to the condition of *the cities of the plain*.

In vain did Burnet's *philosophical* divines in the established church, labour to stem the torrent of infidelity and licentiousness, by studying, and recommending the study of Plato, Tully, and Plotin. Was *this* the way to promote an intimate knowledge of the Scriptures, and an extensive diffusion of Gospel truth? These men, highly talented, and extensively learned as they undoubtedly were, instead of insisting upon the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence, to enable us to know the things of God; urged the sufficiency of mere, unassisted human reason, which, of itself, never did and never can either *know*, or *desire* to know and love God. They treated the operations of grace upon the renewed heart as cant, and enthusiasm; or, at least, as so inscrutably secret, as to be entirely unknown. But in *what* does an unknown operation in heart and life, differ from *no* operation at all?

It is to be apprehended, that from this philosophical source, much of our modern, fashionable, formal divinity is derived: a system of divinity which boasts of reason for its author, and leads to a listless, undevout, *unspiritual* life and practice, as its legitimate end and object. In the eighth volume of the late Joseph Milner's works, in "Gibbon's account of Christianity considered," this subject is well discussed. The whole tract may be very profitably perused; especially the address to sceptics, formalists, and believers.

What with *unscriptural* preaching, and *encouraged* licentiousness, in the reign of Charles the second, religion received a wound in England, which she has *not yet* recovered. In the established church, the very semblance of piety almost entirely disappeared; family religion was very generally laid aside; and great numbers, particularly of the higher ranks, avowed themselves open infidels.

On the accession of James the second, his foolish violence in favour of popery, drove the churchmen

and the dissenters into a temporary political alliance, in support of protestantism. And as soon as the danger was over, the state church requited the aid of the dissenters, by refusing to repeal the *test* and *corporation* acts, which were, originally, passed with the concurrence of dissenters, as a safeguard against popery, and, certainly, *not* intended as a perpetual exclusion of conscientious protestants from civil and military offices.

At the revolution, in 1688, the toleration act of William protected the dissenters from the tender mercies of the established church; as expressed in the intelligible tones of the five mile and conventicle acts, of fine, imprisonment, transportation, and death. A *reunion* of churchmen and dissenters was earnestly endeavoured by William, but frustrated by the state clergy. Indeed, such a desirable event was rendered quite hopeless, not only by a fierce renewal of the dispute about forms of church government, between episcopacy and presbyterianism; but also, by the prevalence of formalism in the establishment, and the very general departure of its clergy from the evangelical doctrines of the articles of the Anglican Church.

In addition to which, the revolution gave birth to another source of quarrel between the state clergy themselves; namely, the distinction between *high* and *low* church; in which religion had little or no share; and which produced a large crop of political and ecclesiastical controversy; and taught multitudes in the establishment to substitute *churchmanship* for Christianity; a doctrine, in which a great body of bishops, priests and deacons, both in England and in these United States, are, *at this hour*, full graduates.

The toleration act, indeed, secures the dissenters in England, from the grosser, and more overt acts of persecution; but they *still* labour under the proscription of political disabilities. And notwithstanding the tolerant and liberal character of William's government; and the labours of archbishops Tillotson and Sharpe,

and other able and well disposed men, evangelical religion declined, and formalism flourished, in England, almost entirely without let or hindrance, down to the year 1738. The established clergy, *if* they believed, certainly did *not* preach the great leading truths of the Gospel, as they are taught in Holy Writ, and expressly embodied in their own articles, homilies, and liturgy; for example, the essential doctrines of original sin; justification of the sinner by faith alone in the merits of Christ; spiritual, *not* baptismal regeneration; communion with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ; the progressive sanctification of the Holy Spirit; the assurance of the favour of God; and all those essential truths, known as the *doctrines of grace*.

The state clergy continued preaching, living, and acting *against*, and subscribing, swearing to, and reading the doctrines of the Anglican Church. Evangelism sounded from the desk, and formalism from the pulpit, very generally, throughout the establishment; until about the year 1740, it pleased God to cause a *revival* of religion in England, by the instrumentality of John Wesley, and George Whitfield, and their coadjutors and followers.

At *that* time, says Erasmus Middleton, a minister of the church of England, who ventured to maintain her articles and homilies in doctrine, and who supported them in fact, by a holy practice, was a kind of prodigy, and met with nothing but censure, persecution, and hard names from *all* ranks and sorts of men. Our pulpits resounded with *morality*, deduced from the principles of nature, and the fitness of things, with *no* relation to Christ, or the Holy Ghost: all which the heathen philosophers have insisted on, and perhaps with more than modern ingenuity; and, *in consequence* of this, our streets have resounded with *immorality*.

Dark, in very deed, and gloomy, was the condition of England, at the commencement of this revival.

Serious and practical Christianity was at its lowest ebb; vital religion, so flourishing at, and subsequent to the Reformation, until stifled by the established church, under Laud and Sheldon, was scarcely known. The only thing insisted upon, seemed to be a defence of the *outworks* of Christianity, against the incessant attacks of avowed infidels. And *what* was the consequence? The writings of infidels multiplied daily, and infidelity spread rapidly among persons of *every* rank, *not* because they were reasoned into it, by force of argument; but because the state clergy held them in entire ignorance of Christ, and of the power of the Gospel.

Hear bishop Butler, a man by no means likely to exaggerate the actual state of things: he says, in the preface to his immortal work on "The Analogy of Religion, natural and revealed, to the constitution and course of Nature," written in May 1736,—“it is come, *I know not how*, to be taken for granted, that Christianity is *not* so much as a subject of inquiry; but that it is now, at length, discovered to be fictitious; and, accordingly, they treat it as if, in the present age, this was an agreed point among all people of discernment; and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule; as it were, by way of reprisals for its having so long interrupted the pleasures of the world.”

In proportion as Whitfield's popularity increased, did his clerical brethren in the establishment oppose and vilify him. Some of them told him that he should not preach again in their pulpits, unless he renounced that part of the preface to his sermon on regeneration, wherein he wished “that his brethren would entertain their auditors oftener with discourses upon the new birth.” The state clergy were also exceedingly angry at his free conversation with serious dissenters, who often invited him to their houses; and repeatedly told him, that if the doctrines of the new birth and of justification by faith, were preached

powerfully in the established church, there would be *few* dissenters in England.

It cannot be too often repeated, nor too deeply considered, by those who wish well to the *real*, the best interests of religion, and of the protestant episcopal church; that, from the time Laud carried the English establishment over from its original Augustinism, or Calvinism, into ostensible Arminianism, but into real formalism, down to the revival of religion, in the reign of George the second; the established church of England languished, and other denominations multiplied upon her decline; and *infidelity*, also, gained ground rapidly, and spread widely throughout the whole nation.

The Anglican Church clergy, it must be acknowledged, have, *as a body*, since the Reformation, maintained a high character for talent and learning; and have written ably and well, upon every subject connected with theology; from expounding and defending the internal, the essential truths of Revelation, down to the mere exterior of the visible church. And, above all, some eminently pious, evangelical men have been found within her venerable pale, in all ages. God has never been left entirely without witnesses in her, notwithstanding her secular state establishment. She has always had some children, who have *not* bowed the knee to Baal. But, generally speaking, the leprosy of formalism pervaded and poisoned the living waters of that church, in their springs, and in their fountains; from the era of Laud's apostacy and persecution, until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century.

Since that period the evangelical doctrines of the Anglican Church, have been faithfully promulgated by an increasing number of her clergy; *notwithstanding* the virulent opposition of their formal brethren, in the shape of misrepresentation and calumny; and the more substantial arguments of her formal bishops, in silencing curates, and refusing to countersign the testimonials of presentees, that have been

found guilty of preaching the Gospel, and enforcing the doctrines of grace; the doctrines of the Reformation; the doctrines of the Anglican articles and homilies.

The notorious infidel Bolingbroke was reading Calvin's Institutes, when Mr. Church, an established clergyman, called upon him. "You have caught me," said the political patron of the English establishment, "reading John Calvin; he was, indeed, a man of great parts, profound sense, and vast learning; he handles the *doctrines of grace* in a very masterly manner." "Doctrines of grace!" exclaimed the learned clerk, "the doctrines of grace have set all mankind together by the ears." "I am surprised to hear you say so," answered the peer, "*you*, who profess to believe and to preach Christianity. Those doctrines are certainly the doctrines of the Bible, and *if* I believe the Bible, I *must* believe them. And let me seriously tell you, that the greatest miracle in the world is the subsistence of Christianity, and its continued preservation as a religion, when the preaching of it is committed to the care of such *unchristian* wretches as you."

At the time of the revival of religion in England, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, the state clergy, pretty generally, conformed to the world, *in the spirit of the world*; following its trifling pleasures, or immersed in its secular pursuits. It was quite enough for them to "do ministerial duty," as the phrase is, on a Sunday; without attempting to improve their own minds by study, or to promote the spiritual interests of the flocks they fleeced. They were easy companions for easy men, who gave themselves no trouble about their own souls, or about God, or any thing else, but taking their pastime in this present world.

Give such men the pleasures of the earth for a season; and the honour of Christ, and the salvation of sinners, are subordinate matters, which may be attended to at any, or at no time, as the case may be.

It was a great matter for an established clerk to emerge from the low debauchery of the times; to abstain from gross swearing, unless in suitable company; and to sleep off a drunken frolic, with all due decorum. Is it to promote piety, and prevent heathenism, that a national church establishment nourishes within her bosom, swearing, drinking, hunting, horse-racing, gambling, ungodly priests?

An unlucky servant spilled some soup upon the laced waistcoat of Sir Jonathan Trelawney, who returned the compliment, by pouring out a volley of oaths upon the culprit. Observing one of the company stare, he smiled, and said—"I do not swear as the bishop of ———, but only as Sir Jonathan Trelawney." "Pray, my lord," replied the gentleman, "if the *baronet* goes to hell, what is to become of the *bishop*?"

But where such gross conduct and open profaneness were avoided, *what* good did the formal preaching of the state clergy effect? Mere morality, derived from man's own *unassisted* strength, neither comes from, nor goes to, the heart. With the whole amount of human efforts, and human attainments, all fallen, corrupt, depraved, feeble, no immortal soul can be satisfied or saved. It was preaching Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, that brought men out from the darkness and death of popery at the Reformation. And it is the *only* preaching that can, at any time, awaken sinners to a true sense of their eternal interests. It is *this* preaching which has drawn, and still continues to draw, thousands from the English established church to the worship and communion of the dissenters; and it is this preaching *alone*, that can ever again build up the establishment in strength.

Intermediate the complaints of bishop Stillingfleet, Dr. Owen and bishop Butler, in the years 1662, 1671 and 1736, respecting the infidelity and profligacy of England, we have similar lamentations from the archbishop of Canterbury and thirteen bishops,

in their Declaration against the Rebellion, published in the year 1715.

These prelates affirm, that the chief hopes of the enemy to succeed in the excited rebellion, arose from discontents, fomented by those, who, too much valued by themselves and others for their *pretended* zeal for the Anglican Church, had joined with *papists* in their nefarious schemes. That members of the established church of England, amidst high professions of zeal for her interests, and fierce denunciations against all nonepiscopalians, and dissenters, should attempt to set up a *popish* pretender for the support of that church, is declared to be such an absurdity, as nothing but an infatuation from God, inflicted for their sins, could suffer to pass upon the nation.

The infidelity, hypocrisy, contention and hatred, charged by this episcopal declaration upon England, are confirmed by every contemporary publication, which characterizes that period. The gall and bitterness, with which the high church Tories, during the reigns of William and Ann, had laboured to poison all social intercourse, and to stifle all religious liberty, had, in the natural order of things, produced a general indifference, and infidelity. The infidel writers were so numerous, and so successful in proselyting the higher classes of the community, that many well-meaning persons foreboded the speedy extinction of Revelation in England. And some years afterwards, bishop Butler told his clergy, in a diocesan charge, that “the influence of religion is *more and more* wearing out of the minds of men; the number of those, who avow themselves unbelievers, increase, and with their numbers, their zeal. The deplorable distinction of *our* age, is an avowed scorn of religion in some, and a growing disregard to it in the generality.”

And no wonder; seeing that the strain of preaching in the English church establishment had been,

for a long time, almost entirely formal. It was, indeed, less bigoted, and less popish, than the sermonizing so much in fashion during the last years of Ann; for the people of England were sick, to the loathing, of exclusive churchmanship, and the indispensable necessity of episcopal baptism to eternal salvation. But a cold, heartless, ethical strain, excluding the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, characterized the discourses of the state clergy. Of this style of preaching bishop Butler's own sermons are a finished specimen; and helped to promote that very infidelity, which he so pathetically lamented.

The only counterbalance to this awful state of things was, the new spirit excited among some of the state clergy; a spirit which the secular and ecclesiastical rulers of the Anglican Church have always laboured, and are now labouring, to suppress and to extinguish. These evangelical clergy are persecuted, because they think that the marks of a true churchman are rather to be found in a vital belief of the truly Scriptural doctrines of the Anglican Church; than in proclaiming, that eternal life is exclusively confined to those who profess an outward conformity to the rites, and ceremonies, and discipline, and government of that church.

They are reproached as intruders, who disturb the formal, sepulchral peace of the establishment, which had been uninterrupted from Bartholomew day, till the rise of Whitfield and Wesley, and their associates. But taking their stand upon the Bible, and the liturgy, articles and homilies of the Anglican Church, these evangelicals have, *as yet*, withstood all the efforts of the formalists to extinguish them; and have hitherto gradually, though slowly, increased in number. How far they will be able to surmount the *new*, and more systematic, and better concerted schemes for their destruction, *now* putting in operation by the secular government, and the established hierarchy of England, the event alone can determine.

The serious part of the English people, even among

the dissenters, who are hostile to all church and state establishments, but who love their country, and know that her well-being essentially depends upon the diffusion of evangelical religion throughout the community, rejoice to find the Gospel faithfully proclaimed in those pulpits, from which it had been almost entirely banished, ever since the ejection of the non-conformists.

But it is doubtful, if those pulpits will not be again restored to the death-sleep of formalism ; seeing that by a clause in an act of parliament, ostensibly passed for another purpose, the constitution of the church of England has been erected into an absolute despotism ; and all the unbeneficed clergy in the establishment are subjected to the arbitrary, irresponsible dominion of the bishops.

Under such circumstances we cannot marvel, that evangelism makes but slow progress in the Anglican Church. So lately as the year 1795, John Newton wrote thus, "the times are dark, but, perhaps, they were darker in England sixty years ago, (1735,) when, though we had peace and plenty, the bulk of the kingdom lay under the judgment of an *unregenerate* ministry, and the people were perishing for lack of knowledge. In this respect the times are better than they were. The Gospel is preached in many parts ; we have it plentifully in London ; and many of our great towns, which were once sitting in darkness, have now the true light. Some of these places were as a wilderness in my remembrance ; and now they are as gardens of the Lord. And every year the Gospel is planted in new places ; ministers are still rising up, the work is still spreading. I am not sure, that in the year 1740, there was a *single* parochial minister, who was publicly known as a Gospel minister, in the whole kingdom. Now we have, I think, not less than *four hundred*."

In another letter, written in 1801, Mr. Newton speaks of the state of religion in the church establish-

ment, at the commencement of the present century; "I am told there are ten thousand parishes in England; I believe *more* than nine thousand of these are destitute of the Gospel." Thus, according to the calculations of this eminently pious man, *not* a tenth part of the established church could hear the Gospel preached within its walls, only twenty years since; and the number of her evangelical clergy, at that period, did *not* amount to one half of those driven out on the 24th of August, 1662. Such are the blessings of a formal, secular church establishment!

In his correspondence with a friend in Scotland, including a period from 1778 to 1784, Mr. Newton enters more into detail upon this important subject. In the year 1778, his friend wrote to him, saying, "as to the aversion to episcopacy, common among religious people here, especially seceders, I cannot say but they often carry it too far. But let it be considered *what* sort of an episcopacy the Scots got a taste of in the last century. How much blood was shed; what dreadful tyranny was used to introduce and establish it; what *profligate* lives did both the bishops and lower clergy lead, and how bloody were they!

"With pleasure, I except my favourite Leighton, who never could enter into the views of his brethren. He bore with them, he prayed for them, and, at length, left them. The west of Scotland is stored with marks of prelatie vengeance. I know many good and worthy men in the church of England abhor these cruelties as much as we can do; but it is hard to bring the common people here to think so. The account of our trading people, when they return from England, helps to keep up the aversion. They bring down but sorry enough accounts of the lower order of the clergy there. Now, to hear of a *drunken* clergyman, or one accustomed to *swearing*, appears, as it really is, a terrible thing, to our people. Though many of our corrupt clergy here, are very far from adorning the Gospel by their walk

and practice, yet they generally preserve outward decency.

“The episcopals still among us, are far from endearing the scheme or party to us. We have some meetings of them in our trading towns. They are divided into jurants, and nonjurants. The jurants qualify to the government, and are on the same footing with episcopals in England. The nonjurants, who will not qualify, are avowed friends to the wicked old cause of the pretender. They are rank Arminians, if not Socinians. They have little learning, and less holiness. Providence seems to be working ruin to their scheme very fast.”

This, it must be confessed, is a somewhat scurvy picture of Scottish episcopacy, drawn by the hand of a Scottish seceder; and it is but just to present a more favourable portrait of the same subject, by an English churchman.

Mr. Middleton, in his *Decades*, from 1780 to 1790, says: the nonjuring bishops of Scotland, to whom Dr. Seabury, of America, had recourse, were themselves objects of sympathy to all those who, disposed to grant that a form of church government was *not* laid down, in so many words, in holy writ, yet could not allow that men, under *any* circumstances, were justified in departing from the primitive and apostolic model. With respect, therefore, to North Britain, though presbyterianism was there *established*, they did *not* regard the Scottish episcopals as dissenters; but rather, as that peculiar body, which, in fact, constituted *the church*, stripped of its former appendages of rank and emolument.

In consequence of the proceedings of the convention of estates, which conveyed the crown to William and Mary, and of the subsequent act of the Scottish parliament, which substituted presbytery for episcopacy, two archbishops and twelve bishops, with nine hundred clergymen, refusing to submit to the new government, were ejected from their sees and benefices. Notwithstanding some severe penal laws passed

against them, a state church being always prone to inflict penalties upon dissidents, the episcopal clergy continued to officiate privately to such as inclined to attend upon their ministrations; while the bishops preserved the succession of their order by new and regular consecrations.

In the course of years, their number considerably diminished; but, as ecclesiastics, they conducted themselves in a praiseworthy manner, performing their functions in private apartments, subsisting on the miserable pittance furnished by their people, and generally abstaining from interference in political disputes. They did not pray for the king of England by name, but they held no connexion with the exiled royal family; though, as an affair of conscience, they admitted the claim of the Stuarts, and called the pretender, prince Charles. The death of the last Stuart claimant to the British throne, in 1788, enabled them to pray for George the third in their religious meetings. Their tender of loyalty was well received; and hopes were given from some of the state officers, that the penal enactments would be removed.

Accordingly, three of the bishops, Skinner, Drummond, and Strachan, went to London in April 1789, to obtain relief. A bill passed the house of commons unanimously in their favour, secretary Dundas being their advocate; but it was lost in the house of lords, by the opposition of chancellor Thurlow. Upon this, the reverend Dr. Gaskin, secretary to the society for promoting Christian Knowledge; Mr. Stevens, treasurer of queen Ann's bounty, and Mr. (now judge) Park, formed themselves into a committee of management; and, in consequence of their efforts, supported by the Anglican episcopate, especially bishops Horne and Horsley, the bill for relief passed into a law, June 11th, 1792.

The next attempt was to promote ecclesiastical unity, which had been much violated. Laymen, fearing to incur penalties by attending the nonjuring

clergy, had frequented chapels, served by ministers ordained in the English and Irish churches, which did *not* acknowledge the Scottish bishops. In this predicament, their places of worship were unconsecrated, and their children unconfirmed; while their character was anomalous, and virtually schismatical. The bishops addressed a public exhortation to the English and Irish clergy, to join their communion. In October 1804, the bishops held a convocation, which unanimously resolved, that subscription to thirty-nine articles, similar to those of the church of England, should be required of candidates for ordination. In consequence, nearly all the clergy submitted to the jurisdiction of the episcopal college.

In order to enlarge the narrow incomes of the bishops, and poorest of the inferior clergy, collections were made in Scotland and in England; the result of which has been the allowance of 100*l.* per annum to the bishops residing in Edinburgh, 60*l.* to the primus, and 50*l.* to each of the other bishops; besides some small stipend to a few of the presbyters. A very primitive contrast this, to the princely revenues, the untold thousands, poured annually into the laps of the incumbent prelates of Canterbury, Durham, Winchester; and, indeed, of the great proportion, both of English and Irish bishops; as well as of other dignitaries, and beneficed clerks, in the united church of England and Ireland.

In answer to his Scottish seceding friend, Mr. Newton says: I do not wonder that prelacy appears in a very unfavourable light in Scotland, as the principal characters who laboured to settle it there, and the general strain of their conduct, would have disparaged the cause of truth itself. And even *at present*, the general appearance of the church of England can have nothing in it very inviting to *spiritual* persons, who have not acquired some previous good will to it by education. But, I believe, this is *not* owing to its outward form, but to the *want* of the Gos-

pel, and to the absence of the Holy Spirit, whose influences are *only* found concurring with the declaration of his own truth.

I believe if all our bishops were such men as Leighton and Bedel, and all our parochial ministers *experimental* preachers of the grace of God, the constitution of the church would *no way* interfere with the general edification of the people; and *without* the influence of the good Spirit, and ministers filled with faith and grace, it signifies little, whether the outward administrations of church matters be in the hands of bishops, or synods, or general assemblies. The Jewish church service was formed upon a confessedly Divine institution; the place, the temple, the seasons, the sacrifices, the priesthood, were all, by express direction, from the Lord. But when they lost sight of spirituality, and rested in *outward* services, in vain they said, the temple of the Lord are we; when the Lord of the temple had forsaken them, and declared himself displeased with his own appointments.

In a letter, written in July 1778, Mr. Newton says: I believe there has *not* been a Gospel sermon preached at Weston Favel since Mr. Hervey's death; nor can I hear that there is one spiritual person in the parish. His other parish of Collingtree is likewise now a dark place; though there may be half a dozen people there, who know something of the Lord. I preached twice a year at Collingtree, for about ten years, but I am now quite shut out. Mr. Hervey's usefulness was chiefly in his writings. A few people in the neighbourhood profited by him, who, since his death, have mostly joined the dissenters; but he never knew that one soul was awakened in the parish where he lived, though he was, in every respect, one of the greatest preachers of the age. As plain in his pulpit service, as florid in his writings. The Lord showed in him, that the work is all his own, and that the best instrument can do no more

than he appoints. His own mother and sister lived with him; his temper was heavenly, his conversation always spiritual and instructive; yet he could make *no* impression upon them, living or dying.

I did not suppose that the *seceders*, or any other spiritual people, confined the church of Christ within *their own* pale, by express or positive declaration; but I thought the seceders made a point of having as little communication as possible, in spirituals, beyond their pale. Indeed, I believe *all* denominations, *as such*, abound with bigotry in favour of their own side; and that the ministers and private Christians in each, are more or less freed from it, in proportion as they are favoured with more of the unction of the Holy Spirit, and as they have more opportunities of observing *his* work carried on amongst *other* parties. And, perhaps, the most catholic-minded Christian upon earth has more bigotry in him than he is aware of.

To esteem all modes and forms of worship as equally agreeable to the Scriptures, or conducive to edification; or all difference of sentiment amongst those who hold the head, to be of no real importance, is *quite* a different thing. We have a right to judge and act for ourselves, and to follow the light we have received; and are only blameable when we censure or dislike others, because they do not exactly see with our eyes, in matters *not* essential.

In another letter, written soon after, Mr. Newton says: this county of Leicester was, seven years ago, a very dark land. But the Lord has since caused the light of his Gospel to shine at Leicester, here, and in three or four other towns. He placed Mr. Robinson at Leicester, a young man of Cambridge, whom he furnished with abilities, zeal, and meekness, suitable to the station. For, as he was only curate at first, it seemed no easy matter so to obviate the prejudices of an ignorant and numerous people, as to be able to maintain his standing; and, at the same time, be faithful to their souls. But the Lord was with him, and

therefore he prospered. And the Lord has since fixed him, and given him one of the five churches there for his own. He has been, and is, very useful; preaches to large congregations, and many people are turned from darkness to light, and walk worthy of the Gospel.

Humanly speaking, if the act of parliament giving the English bishops power of summary and irresponsible suspension, had been passed while Mr. Robinson was only curate at Leicester, he would have been soon silenced; seeing, that since the enactment of that infamous law, many less powerful foes to formalism and irreligion, than Mr. Robinson, have been driven out of the diocese of Lincoln, for the offence of being zealous Gospel preachers, and faithful parish priests. Mr. Vaughan has written a very interesting account of the exemplary life, and spiritual labours, of Mr. Robinson.

Mr. Newton likewise mentions Dr. Ford, as an evangelical churchman. He was intimate with the late archbishop of Canterbury, and on the high road to clerical honours. But when the Lord revealed his Gospel to him, and gave him a thirst for the good of souls, those who thought to promote him were *offended*. He expects to live and die vicar of Melton Mowbray. But he has a higher honour than the world can give; that of winning souls for Christ.

Speaking of himself and his removal to London, Mr. Newton says: it is a time of trial at Olney, but it is needed. I had provided a minister to succeed me, but the people were infatuated to refuse him; though they knew, and could not but respect him. Now they wish for him, but it is too late. His name is Scott, a neighbouring curate, whom the Lord was pleased to call and teach himself. The narrative of his conversion, called *The Force of Truth*, is, in my judgment, one of the clearest, most striking, and satisfactory accounts of a supernatural change, that has appeared in print at any time.

I am wonderfully at peace in my new settlement.

My lecture on the Lord's day evening is much crowded. My dispensation, likewise, seems to be peace. My congregation is made up from various and discordant parties; who, in the midst of differences, can agree in one point, to hear patiently a man who is of *no* party. I say little to my hearers of the things wherein they differ; but aim to lead them all to a growing and more experimental knowledge of the Son of God, and a life of faith in him. The physician's business is with the body itself, how to preserve or to restore health. The care of the dress, the knowledge of the fashions, a skilful contrivance about the size, shape, or colour of the coat, is the business of the tailor. But I *cannot* submit to be a tailor in divinity. If I see my patients thriving in the power of godliness, I leave them to the Lord, and their own consciences, as to the *form*.

In February 1781, Mr. Newton says: as to the state of religion in this city, London, there are in the *establishment* but *two* Gospel ministers, with churches of their own; Mr. Romaine and myself. But we have about *ten* clergymen, who, either as morning preachers or lecturers, preach either on the Lord's day, or at different times of the week, in perhaps fifteen or sixteen churches. The tabernacle and Tottenham-court chapel are very large, and in the hands of Mr. Whitfield's trustees. In them, the Gospel is dispensed to many thousands of the people by a diversity of ministers, clergy, dissenters, or lay preachers, who are, in general, lively, faithful, and acceptable men.

There is likewise the Lock, and another chapel in Westminster, served by Mr. De Coetlegen, and Mr. Peckwell; both well attended. And so is lady Huntingdon's chapel, which will hold about two thousand, and is supplied by able ministers. There is another, not so large, in the same connexion. Mr. Wesley has one large, and several smaller chapels; and though they are Arminians, there are many excellent Christians, and some good preachers among them. There are, likewise, several preachers of the methodist stock, not connected with any of the dissenting boards.

The churches, chapels, &c. open on the Lord's day for the methodists, as distinct from dissenters, will contain thirty thousand people, and are generally all crowded.

Among the dissenters, the presbyterians, excepting a few Scottish churches, have deviated widely from the way of their forefathers. Their ministers are, some of them, men of learning and abilities; but very few preach the doctrines of the Cross. Their auditories are rather polite and elegant, than numerous; and their profession of religion not very strict. Experience and observation prove, that *no* doctrine but Jesus Christ and him crucified, will turn the stream of the heart, or withstand the stream of the world.

The baptists are general and particular; the latter is the larger and sounder part. They are a respectable people, have many good ministers, and are tenacious of the truth. They are, I think, over zealous about the point of baptism; and their numbers are more increased by proselytes from other denominations, than by conversion under their own preachers.

The independents, for the most part, retain a form of sound words; though some appear verging to a declension in doctrine. The life and glory, I apprehend, is abated among them as a body. Some of their sound, judicious, able preachers are poorly attended; and conformity to the world seems growing among these non-conformists. We have, further, in London, and in some other places, settlements of Moravians; than whom I know not a more excellent, spiritual, evangelical people.

These are my thoughts on the Lord's *floor* in this city. In the great abounding of profession, too many, doubtless, bear no nearer relation to the true church, than the chaff to the wheat; but I hope the number of solid, exemplary believers is very considerable; and I hope the Lord's work is growing and spreading, both in city and country. Every year *adds* to

the number of evangelical clergymen, and the Lord still maintains a succession of promising young men in both the universities ; some of whom are ordained every season ; yet the number of serious students is still kept up by others, whose hearts he inclines to devote themselves to sanctuary service.

This is *almost* the only encouraging sign we have in this dark and awful day ; and it *does* encourage me to hope, that, sinful as we are, the Lord will not give us up to the will of our enemies ; because he has a remnant, and a work amongst us.

What proportion the *papists* bear to other dissenters, I know not ; but we are more in danger of being overrun with *infidelity* than popery. Nor do I believe that the papists are remarkably increased. I am no friend to popish errors, but could *not*, in conscience, join the *protestant association*. I did not wish for the act in favour of the papists ; I thought it granted too much. But when it had passed, I could not join in the petition for a total repeal, and to bring back *all* former penalties. The first movers of the association were mostly my friends. They acted, doubtless, conscientiously, but were mistaken in their principles.

I think the papists should be restrained from teaching the children of protestants. But they have as good a right to judge for themselves, and to educate their own children as I have. Our Lord's kingdom is not of this world, and *his* subjects have no warrant from his word to inflict pains and penalties upon any people, in matters pertaining to conscience ; of which he *alone* is the Lord and Judge. The protestant association, when it became popular, was adopted by thousands, whose *whole* religion consisted in a cry against popery. It sounded in my ears like the old cry, Μεγάλη ἡ Ἀρτεμις, and, at length, issued in those horrible riots, which will leave a lasting stain upon our history.

The better part of the association abhorred those outrages ; but though they had no such design, they

proved the occasion. And though they meant well, I consider the event as a token of the Lord's disapprobation of the methods they took. It seemed as if giving the papists more liberty, was the *only* sin of the nation; the only evil that called for redress. There was *no* association formed, nor petition thought of, for the suppression of the abominable profanation of the Lord's day, of adultery, drunkenness, profaneness, or perjury; *no* apprehension entertained of those evils, which, though *almost* universal among us, would *not* have been suffered in the better days of pagan Rome. But allowing liberty to papists appeared the chief thing; the one thing to be complained of, and guarded against. I did not wonder at the issue. The Lord will pour contempt upon a spirit of *intolerance*, even when manifested by his own people.

And in a subsequent letter, recurring to this subject, he says: I am such an enemy to popery, that I dislike it, even in a protestant form; and *all* parties of protestants are more or less infected with it. If I claim the liberty of seeing with my own eyes, I speak like a protestant; if I expect others to see with my eyes, or wish to punish, or despise them, if they do not, I *so far* act in the spirit of popery. I do not wish to see popery prevail in England, but it is a judgment we well deserve.

As a Christian, I am not called to prevent the growth of popery, any *other* way, than by preaching the truth, by prayer, and by a Gospel conversation. As to what can be done by edicts and penalties, let the dead bury their dead; I leave it to the men of the world, who can see *no other* walls or bulwarks for the security of the church of Christ, than such as they are able to build themselves. I dare not look to any protection, but that of God. I have nothing to do with an arm of flesh in this business. At present, I must own, that *infidelity*, and contempt of God, appear to me more terrible, more upon the increase, and more likely to be

our ruin, than popery. If there was not a papist in the kingdom, I should still fear we are almost ripe for destruction.

How it is in Scotland, I know not; but I believe most of the loudest, in England, against popery, had little more regard for the true Gospel than the papists themselves. And though some good persons were among them, the majority of serious people were quiet in their tents, and more taken up with mourning over the *general* prevalence of sin, than with the liberty granted to the papists.

In March 1783, Mr. Newton, in reference to the narrow spirit of sectarianism, asks the same correspondent: Is it not strange, that, when we profess to receive the New Testament as our rule, and to form our plans upon it, some of the plainest and most obvious precepts should be so generally overlooked? How plain is that in Rom. xv. 7! Now how does Christ receive us? Does he wait till we are all exactly of a mind? does he confine *his* regards, *his* grace, *his* presence, within the walls of a party? is he the God of the presbyterians, or the independents only? do not some amongst you, and some amongst us, *know*, with equal certainty, that he *has* received them? Do not they, and do not we, know what it is to taste that he is gracious? does he not smile upon your ordinances, and upon ours? are not the fruits of faith the *same*, on both sides of the Tweed, and in every corner of the land?

And shall zeal presume to come in, with its *ifs* and its *buts*, and to build up walls of separation between those who are joined to the Lord by one spirit; in direct contradiction to the tenor of the whole Rom. xiv.; and think it has a right to despise and censure, to judge and condemn, when it is expressly forbidden to interfere? The Lord, by his apostle, says: let every one be persuaded in his own mind; and how dares zeal say otherwise? Yet many true believers are so much under the spirit of self and prejudice,

that they verily mean to do the Lord service, by substituting *their own* for *his* commands. And they say, you must think and act as I do, subscribe my paper, and worship in my way; or else, though I hope the Lord has received you, it is my duty to keep my distance from you.

This assuming, dictating spirit, is popery among us in a protestant form; indeed, the root and source whence most of the popish abominations have sprung. It is much the same to me, whether the Scriptures are locked up, or not, if I must read them with another's eyes. I think we have all an equal right to judge for ourselves, and that we are no more bound to follow implicitly the *sic volumus*, *sic jubemus*, or *sic arbitramur* of a bench of bishops, or a board of independents, or a general assembly, than of a conclave of cardinals.

I could fill a sheet on the mournful subject of the *profligacy* and calamities of the times. The Lord's hand is lifted up, but few acknowledge or are affected by it. Our public affairs are dark, and likely to be darker. I cannot but rejoice that an end is put to the destructive war abroad; but I dread the effects of our dissensions and confusions at home; especially when I see how *profaneness*, *infidelity*, and all the usual forerunners of national ruin, abound and spread. We seem to have little more union, public spirit, or sense of the hand of God over us, than the Jews had, just before the destruction of Jerusalem.

And yet I hope we shall not, like them, be given up to utter ruin. For, though the nation at large seems wicked and obstinate to an extreme; yet the Lord has a people among us, and, I hope, upon the increase. And though too many professors are far from adorning the Gospel they profess, yet there are, I hope, a growing number of excellent Christians who sigh and mourn for the evils they cannot prevent, and are standing in the breach, in the spirit of wrestling prayer. For the elects' sake, I hope, the

days of trouble shall be shortened and moderated; and that we shall not be utterly forsaken.

And in November 1784, Mr. Newton writes to his seceding friend, that what seems principally *wanting*, both in England and in Scotland, is a dispensation of the Holy Spirit. *Without* this, I hardly see a pin to choose among all the different modes and forms of church government. *With* this, the one true church of Christ would flourish with us and with you, under *all* the different forms, which obtain amongst those who hold the head.

The parishes, in England, where the *people* choose their ministers, are comparatively few. The most are appointed by patrons. But the great Head of the church has the supreme patronage. And Gospel ministers are, *here and there*, brought into both sorts of places. Even in Cambridge, we have *two* faithful and able parochial ministers. The number of Gospel preachers in *our* church is greatly upon the increase; several valuable young men are ordained every quarter; perhaps not fewer than *twenty* or *thirty* in a year. And, now and then, we hear of a *minister* awakened in his own parish, after a course of years spent without any regard to the souls of his people, or any skill to teach them.

Some, who have taken pains to get the best information, think we have now more than *three hundred* (out of *eleven thousand* established clergy) Gospel preachers, fixed in parishes; the *most* of them, either curates or lecturers; but we have a good number of beneficed clergymen among them; and, in some places, a considerable work. London is highly favoured. But though we have many good preachers, multitudes of hearers, and many excellent Christians, there is, likewise, abundance of light professors; and, I think, a general complaint that the ordinances, though blessed to the edification of believers, are *not* signally owned to the conversion of sinners.

In a correspondence with Mr. Campbell, of Scotland, covering an interval of years from 1789 to 1802, Mr.

Newton not only shows the state of religion in the Anglican Church establishment, during that period; but, in his own truly catholic spirit, exhibits a fine contrast to those sectarian bigots, with whom churchmanship is all, and Christianity nothing.

In 1792, he writes: the *revival* at Bala demands thankfulness. The Lord, according to his sovereign pleasure, now and then vouchsafes such seasons of refreshment, as draw the attention of many. But hitherto they have usually been local and temporary. I remember one in Scotland, almost fifty years ago. The most extensive, I think, took place in America, about the same time, and was first observed under Dr. Edwards's ministry, at Northampton. There is generally *much good* done in such seasons of power; but we must *not* expect that every appearance will answer our wishes. There are many more blossoms upon a tree in spring, than there will be apples in autumn. Yet we are glad to see blossoms, because we know, that if there are *no* blossoms, there can be *no* fruit.

When such sudden and general awakenings take place among people, ignorant, and unacquainted with Scripture, they are more or less attended with blemishes and misguided zeal. The enemy is watchful to sow tares among the wheat. Thus it has always been. It was so in the Apostle's day. Offences arise, and they who wish to find something at which to stumble and cavil, by the righteous judgment of God, have what they wish for. But they who love the Lord, and have a regard for precious souls, will rejoice in the *good* that is really done; and can account for the occasional mixtures, from the present state of human nature. That the good work at Bala may flourish, and extend to London and Edinburgh, is my sincere prayer.

I would, in passing, notice, that the English established church, as a body, uniformly *discourages*, and labours to destroy, all rivals of religion. From the time of the great revival under Wesley and

Whitfield, through all the subsequent awakenings, to the present hour, the secular governors of the Anglican Church, and its bishops and dignitaries, generally, have set their faces, as so many flints, against every appearance of the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, operating to call those who are, by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, to life, and light, and immortality, in God, as Christ reconciling himself to them. And sorry am I to be obliged to add, that in *this* respect, as well as in some other *not* to be commended instances, too large a portion of the American-Anglo-Church follows the unscriptural example of its established mother.

“What do people mean by the *revival* of religion?” asked one of our most intelligent, learned, and amiable churchmen, the other day. His ecclesiastical instructor answered, that “these revivals were all nonsense, and cant, and irregularity, and fanaticism, and methodism, and Calvinism. For all *regularly* baptized persons *are* regenerated, and need no revival; and all others, being nonepiscopalians, and having *no* covenant claim to salvation, have no religion to revive; but are as our aboriginal Indians, and other heathen.”

Nevertheless, with all due deference to this great dragon of formalism, there *is* such a thing as a revival of religion. Many revivals have *recently* occurred, and are *still* progressive, in this, and in some of the eastern states, and in many other parts of the American Union. A revival of religion is an awakening of those who are perishing in the death-sleep of carnal security and confidence; covered all over with the thick scales of formalism; living without God, and without Christ, and without hope, in the world; to a sense of their own natural depravity, their lost condition, the necessity of a *change* of heart; of living by faith, of leading a pure and holy life, of laying hold on Christ, as the *only*, the *sole* source of their eternal salvation.

There was a great revival of religion in Europe at the Reformation from popery, when God raised up Luther, and Calvin, and Melancthon, and others, as beacon lights, to show their fellow-men, regularly baptized, and episcopally regenerated, as were *then* nearly all the inhabitants of Christendom, the way from the darkness of form, and ceremony, and superstition, and lust, and blood, up into the open daylight of the pure Gospel.

There was a great revival of religion in England, among all denominations, about the middle of the eighteenth century, under the powerful evangelical preaching of Wesley and Whitfield, and their disciples and followers. There *is* a great revival of religion *now*, over almost all Christendom; nay, even in the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches; notwithstanding the deadly hostility of their numerous hosts of formal, secular clergy, to every thing in the shape of evangelical doctrine, and spiritual piety.

A revival of religion causes men to cast away all confidence in their own *self*-righteousness; and to exchange their semipagan, vapid ethics, for the pure doctrines of grace; the doctrines of the Reformers, of the Apostles, of Christ. All which are as a volume sealed, and a fountain closed, to formalists; who never *thus* either instruct the living, or direct the dying. For example, in visiting the *sick*, they confine their views to mere *human* relations; and bid the departing sinner be of good cheer; because, peradventure, he has neither cheated, nor robbed, nor murdered any of his fellow-men; has neither, to use Mr. Jefferson's phrase, picked a pocket, nor broken a leg.

Which may, possibly, be all very true; and yet the expiring creature *not* be fit to appear before the judgment-seat of that God, who will not suffer sin to go unpunished; who requires a living faith, internal holiness, and a saving *personal* interest in the all-suffi-

cient sacrifice ; as the indispensable passports to eternal life.

It is worthy of remembrance, that *this* mode of administering consolation to a sick or death bed, is precisely similar to that described by Mr. Ward, in his Farewell Letters, as taking place among the formalists of Hindusthan. When a Hindu comes to die, his friends endeavour to console him by repeating his good deeds ; that he has always been a *good* man ; has worshipped the gods ; regularly performed his ablutions ; been liberal to the priests ; has done nobody any harm ; and that therefore, he can have nothing to fear.

Thus, formalism is the same self-righteous self-idolatry in a Hindu heathen, as in a regularly baptized, nominal Christian.

In May 1793, Mr. Newton writes,—so far as *popery* may concern the civil state of the nations, I apprehend no great danger from it. *Infidelity* and scepticism are the spreading popery at present. The spirit and strength of popery seems broken, and the pope little more regarded by the bulk of the Roman church, than by the protestants. The heavy penal laws, formerly in force, however politically necessary, do *not* appear consistent either with the letter or spirit of the New Testament. In a religious view, I cannot see why a papist has not as good a right to worship God according to his conscience, though erroneous, and to educate his children, as I have myself. I am no friend to persecution or restraint in matters of conscience.

The stir made in 1780, when protestants were gaining more liberty in popish countries, was a reproach to our national character, both as Britons and protestants. And I hope never to see such a time again upon such a pretence. I cannot see that an unprincipled or wicked protestant, is a whit better than a bigoted papist. Yet these, of all sorts, are tolerated.

And towards the close of the same year, he says ; I have a letter from Dr. Robbins, of Plymouth, in

Massachusetts, whose name I never heard before. He gives an account of a sudden *revival* of religion there, much like that you had from Bala. It began since Christmas last, when every thing seemed dead or declining around him. He has been a minister there upwards of thirty years. He writes like a good old soldier. Thus, in different places, the wall of Zion is building up in these troublous times. The Lord has *not* forsaken the earth, bad as it is. In London we have abundance of the Gospel; and, perhaps, it never was more clearly and practically preached. But we may lament with you, the want of more accompanying power.

When we really feel our *need* of a revival, it is a sign that we are already, in a measure, revived. The grand symptom of a decline is *insensibility*. When Ephraim has gray hairs, the mark of leprosy here and there upon him, and knoweth it not: Hosea, vii. 9. But, indeed, we *all* need reviving in our persons, families, religious societies, and in the nations. We *pray* for it, and perhaps the Lord is about to answer our prayers, by the very things we are afraid of. The building of the wall may be carried on most prosperously in troublous times. And whatever report flesh and sense may make, faith will allow that those *must* be the best times, when the best cause flourishes most. It is to be hoped that many have been taught by famine, sword, or pestilence, after they had long heard the Gospel in vain.

In August 1794, he says: if I was qualified to search out the *best* Christian in the kingdom, I should *not* expect to find him either in a professor's chair, or in a pulpit. I should give the palm to that person, who had the *lowest* thoughts of himself, and the most admiring and cordial thoughts of the Saviour. And, perhaps, this may be some bedridden old man or woman, or a pauper in a parish workhouse. Our regard to the Lord is not to be measured by our sensible feelings, by what we can say or write; but by the simpli-

city of our dependence, and the uniform tenor of our obedience to *his* will. But, I trust, I wish *equally* well to the Gospel, whether preached in a church, a chapel, a kirk, a meeting house, or a barn; and whether the preachers are of the English or Scottish establishments, seceders, reliefmen, or methodists.

The Gospel certainly *spreads* in the establishment. Young men of abilities and piety are ordained every season; there are four seasons in the year; and we now and then hear of clergymen awakened, after they had been blind teachers of the blind, for many years. In London we are highly favoured with many ministers of the first rank for zeal and wisdom. Such there are, likewise, in some of our great towns, as Leicester, Birmingham, Leeds, Halifax, York, Hull, Reading; and, I hope, there are several hundreds, settled in places of less note, who are diligent and useful. Add to this, the itinerants in town and country, in Whitfield's, Wesley's, and lady Huntingdon's departments, among whom are many faithful and good preachers; and many of the evangelical dissenters; and we may hope, that real religion is reviving and spreading amongst us.

This, I trust, is a token, *almost* the only one, for good, in this dark and threatening day. The *bulk* of the nation is asleep in sin; *infidelity*, folly, and dissipation abound every where; but the Lord *has* a praying people, who mourn the evils they cannot prevent, and the miseries which are the fruits of sin. These, I hope, would appear a large number, if brought all together; but scattered as they are up and down, they are *one in him*; and for *their* sakes, I hope our civil and religious privileges will be still preserved to us.

Yet in November of the same year, he writes: the profanation of the Lord's day is a great sin; but many sin through ignorance. They have neither good example to lead them to church, nor good instruction when they go. It is one of the many crying sins, which form our national character. But I do *not* think it is the loudest. And I think the guilt of it lies heavily

on the *great*, the *magistrates*, and the (*established*) *clergy*. If the hungry sheep look up, they are *not* fed; or the places where there *is* food for them, are *very few*.

In February 1795, he says: I think the Roman Catholics in Ireland were long treated much like Israel in Egypt. I do *not* consider their toleration as any way connected with religion; and as a political measure, I highly approve it, upon the principle, that I am glad of liberty to worship God according to my light; and, therefore, am very willing that others should have the same liberty. *Toleration*, if considered as a matter of favour, is an insult upon conscience, and an intrusion on the prerogative of the Lord of conscience. I should be glad of a toleration to eat, if I might not eat without it; yet I should think it hard, if I could not breakfast or dine, without the leave of a parliament.

Popery always showed a *persecuting* spirit; and therefore, when the protestants got power, as they were unwilling to risk being again called to the honour of suffering for the Gospel's sake, and equally unable to trust in the providence of God, they entrenched themselves within a bulwark of cruel, unchristian, penal laws. The Jewish nation was a theocracy, and idolatry was not only a sin against God, but a crime against the state, and, therefore, punishable with death. Protestants availed themselves of this precedent: call the papists idolaters, and treat them as you please. Tear away their children from them; hinder them from worshipping God at all. Let any rebellious, profligate son, claim his father's estate, if he will but renounce popery, he need not have *any* religion; he may be an atheist, provided he promises not to be a papist. Oppress them as much as you can, and if you do not quite murder them, admire your own mercy.

I abhor the treatment of the presbyterians in Scotland, in Charles the second's time; and I do not think much better of the severities against the pa-

pists in Ireland. I did not wonder at the contempt the Lord poured upon the mistaken zeal of the protestant association of the year 1780. Can the Gospel of Christ authorize *such* things? Are these the fruits of love? Is it thus we do as we wish to be done by? Surely, the Son of Man came, not to destroy, but to save men's lives.

In June 1795, he says: many think, yea, many presume to say, that God does *not* govern the earth. He *has* a controversy with the nations, and especially with *our* nation; which, considering our superior privileges, I deem to be the *worst* in Christendom. Yet the light and power of the Gospel are certainly upon the increase in England. This is the only good sign of the times I can discern. We may pray *in faith* for the spread of the Gospel, and the enlargement of our Lord's kingdom; for we may be sure, *this* is the great design he has in view; and for which the wheels of time and nature are kept in motion.

This is the grand mark, to which the rise and fall of empires, and the commotions of the present day, have a direct tendency; though the way of the Lord is so in the sea, that we short-sighted creatures cannot trace the connexion of events, and the dependence of one upon another. But his word warrants us to believe, what we cannot clearly see. And, even now, his hand is so visibly and awfully lifted up, that it becomes *us* to see, and acknowledge it, and humble ourselves under it; whether others will or not. The Lord has a controversy with *this* nation; he is pleading his own cause against the prevailing spirit of *infidelity*, and the abominations that abound; and he *will* make sinful worms know that *he* is the Lord, and that in all they speak proudly, he is above them.

Let us, my friend, settle it as a maxim, that it is the best time, when the best cause flourishes most; for as the life is more than meat, so is the soul more

than the body. If one half of the kingdom was ravaged by war, provided the distress was sanctified to stir up many careless ones to seek the Lord and his salvation; such a dispensation would be more a mercy than a judgment.

In reference to his own situation, and the *offence* which his evangelism gave to the church establishment, Mr. Newton writes, in July 1796: some have wondered, of late, *how* I could stay with comfort in my present situation. But nothing is imposed upon me, as a clergyman, that hurts my conscience. I find liberty in the service; my church is full and crowded; my auditory peaceful and attentive; there are many eminent Christians among them, and a general seriousness upon the face of the congregation. Some, and as times go, many, are successfully awakened; and we have, particularly, a fine show of young people springing up, and increasing in numbers and graces, like willows by the water-courses.

In a word, the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the hungry are fed, the burdened are set at liberty. With these tokens of the Lord's presence amongst us, and his goodness afforded in my private and public work, I am well satisfied that I am where he would have me to be. If he accepts and visits us, it is a small matter if some of our brethren are *displeased*. If *he* is pleased to smile upon us, we can bear *their* censures. Besides, if I leave this church, to whom must I go? The presbyterians, independents, baptists, seceders, &c. *all* say, with equal positiveness: *we* are the people. But I cannot join them all. By the grace of God, I will love, and pray for them *all*; but will join none of them. I will stay where I am; and if I were to choose again, I would make the same choice to-morrow. I never did, I trust I never shall repent it. My reasons assigned in the *Apologia*, are more and more confirmed to me, the longer I live.

In the October following, he writes: we spent the

first week at Reading, where the Lord has many people, warm-hearted, upright and loving. The rest of our time we were at Mr. T——'s, at Portswood Green. He lives within two miles of S——, where there are five churches, but *no* pulpit open for me. But Mr. T—— opened his house, and made room for about three hundred hearers. I preached three evenings in the week, while I stayed; we were often full; my hearers were chiefly from the neighbouring villages, and seem willing to hear the Gospel, *if* they had any body to preach it to them. But, alas! in those parts, and in *many* parts of the kingdom, comparatively a land of light, the hungry sheep look up, but are *not* fed.

We need not go far from home to find people no less ignorant of spiritual things; no less unconcerned about their souls, than the heathens in Africa or Otaheite. We are encouraged, yea, commanded to pray, that the Lord of the harvest would send forth more faithful labourers; for as yet they are but few, compared with the extensive wilds, *at home*, and abroad.

In April and July 1797, he says: I am glad you have seen a *Moravian* brother. They are in general alike; and have a few peculiarities resulting from their church constitution; but *as a body*, are the most exemplary, peaceful, and spiritual society, of all that bear the Christian name. Their grand object, in which their excellence is signally displayed, is the conversion of the heathen. In *this* branch, without noise or notice, they have done *more* in promoting the knowledge of the true Gospel, in about fifty years, than has been done by all Christendom, in fifteen hundred years before them. God has given them the true missionary spirit; and excepting Mr. Brainerd, and two or three more, in North America, they have hitherto had a monopoly of it; though Mr. Cary, the baptist missionary in Bengal, is treading in their steps. Their patience, fortitude, self-de-

nial, perseverance, courage, holy wisdom, and success, would be astonishing, did we not know whose they are, and whom they serve.

I am glad that a spirit of *prayer* is excited in your parts, on a *national* account. I wish it was *more* so with us. I hope we have many, though comparatively few, whose eyes affect their hearts; and who mourn in secret the evils they cannot prevent. *These* are the chariots and horsemen of our Israel. I have little hope from our fleets and armies, *farther* than the Lord may be pleased to give them success, in answer to the prayers of his people.

This truly Scriptural sentiment coincides with the strong expression of an eminent American divine, delivered from the pulpit, on a fast day, during the late war between the United States and Britain. After showing, both from the Bible and from history, that pure religion is the *only* sure bulwark of human society, the preacher said, "to sum up all in a single sentence, one praying old woman is of *more* importance to the safety of our country, than twenty blaspheming generals."

Mr. Newton continues: I hope the spirit for *missions*, which has of late been so generally awakened, will, in due time, by the Lord's blessing, produce much good. The *first* and present good effect of it is the concern excited for the multitudes in *our own* land, who are perishing for lack of knowledge. The evangelical *dissenters* amongst us are taking this matter into serious consideration, and are sending forth missionaries into all quarters. And though I am of the establishment, and their zeal is *not* likely to aggrandize mother church, if they employ fit instruments, and the Lord is pleased to own their labours, I must and will rejoice; for I dare not wish the sheep should be starved, because *their own* reputed and official pastors *cannot*, or *will not* feed them.

I know that many on *your* side of the Tweed, deem presbyterian order to be *de jure divino*; a tabernacle made exactly according to the pattern on the mount;

and that it would be criminal either to add, or to take away a single loop or pin. On *our* side of the river, many think as highly of episcopal, or of congregational order. Perhaps much of our differences of opinion on this head, may be ascribed to the air we breathed, and the milk we drank in our infancy. If I had lived in Scotland, and known the Lord, my ministry, I suppose, would have been in the kirk, or the relief, or the secession; and if Dr. Erskine had been born and bred among us, and regarded according to his merit, he might have been archbishop of Canterbury long ago.

Thus, I have given my free sentiments on your knotty point. I would not willingly offend any one. I claim the privilege of thinking for myself, and am well content that others should enjoy the same. I hope I love *all*, who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. If they agree with me in *this* point, I would not waste half an hour in attempting to convert them to my opinion in smaller matters. I leave others to dispute if the husk or the shell of the nut be better. I hope to be content with the kernel.

In the October following, he writes: the Gospel ministers in our establishment are mostly confined to their parishes, and cannot do much abroad; but the congregational dissenters are stirring in most parts of our kingdom, and associating with a design to spread the good news among the villages in their respective neighbourhoods, which are wofully *neglected* (by the *state* clergy) in many places. Indeed, we cannot expect those who have *no* concern for their own souls, should be careful for the souls of their parishioners. I fear, but *few* of them, comparatively, have either the *will*, or the *skill*, which the shepherd's office requires; and therefore, though I am a mighty good churchman, I *must* bid God speed to the labours of all who preach the truth in love, whether in meetings or barns, in the highways or the fields. It is better people should be dissenters, or methodists, than [*regularly* baptized] heathens.

Infidelity spreads, and, I trust, the Gospel spreads likewise. Perhaps, the time is coming, when all sects and parties shall be reduced to two—Christians and infidels. So it was at the first promulgation of the Gospel. For what I know, before long, the infidel spirit may be so prevalent, that no man, without real grace, will dare to avow even a professional attachment to the name of Jesus; then, *formal* professors will drop off like leaves from the trees in October.

In the year 1798, he says: I rejoice in the success of the northern mission. May it still increase! I trust the Lord *is* spreading and reviving his work in our land, and if so, I care not by *what* instruments, or under *what* mode or name, the good cause is promoted.

I suppose the introduction to the Northern Tour will *not* be relished by every one; but the arguments in favour of *itinerancy*, and *lay* preaching, will not be easily refuted. Yet still I think lay preachers should be sent, if not by bishops, consistories, or elders, at least, by some religious persons or societies, competent to judge of their fitness. Perhaps even this would not be necessary, if all, who undertake the service, were men of character and abilities. But the position, that every man, who *thinks* himself qualified to preach, has therefore a warrant to go forth, produces many bad effects on *our* side of the Tweed.

Some of them, though they can smite with the hand, stamp with the foot, and speak with a loud voice, do *not* well understand what they say, nor whereof they affirm; their preaching is crude, often erroneous. They diffuse pride, censoriousness, antinomianism, and party rage amongst their adherents; for few are so bad but they have some adherents. The characters of others are suspicious; they run about to the neglect of their proper business, and their families, and, perhaps, become bankrupts; and cause the good way to be evil spoken of.

I know not if infidelity has greatly spread, though its avowal is more public. Many, perhaps most, were

heart-infidels, before they read the books to which they ascribe their new wisdom. But the writings of Paine, and others, like the spear of Ithuriel, have brought them forth in their true characters.

Infidelity is now enthroned at Rome; and many of the cardinals have sung hymns to the praise of French liberty; but popery still subsists in many parts of Christendom; therefore, I think, infidelity has *not* done all its work.

Notwithstanding the confusion and misery spread over the greater part of Europe, and reaching even to our sister kingdom, we, in *this* island, are still preserved in internal peace. May we not accept *his* repeated interpositions in our favour, as a token for good; that though he will chasten, he will not destroy, nor give us up to the will of them that hate us? May we not accept it as an answer to the *prayers* of his remnant amongst us? A *small* remnant, indeed, compared with the nation at large; but *not* very small in the aggregate number.

If all, who stand in the breach, pleading for mercy, could be brought together into one place, I trust they would appear a goodly company. And though they are scattered and dispersed up and down the land, the salt of the earth, which preserves it from *total* putrefaction; yet, in *his* view, they are all one connected army, who meet, and unite daily, and often, at the same rallying point, the throne of grace. Is not the spirit, that is engaged to spread the Gospel *at home*, as well as abroad, another token for good, at such a time as this? Far from recalling *his* ambassadors, which might have an awful appearance of war, I trust he is increasing their numbers, and enlarging their powers.

Many neglected spots, in different parts of England, are already beginning to rejoice and blossom as the rose. I question, if any thing you see in Scotland can give you an idea of the *ignorance* and wretchedness that reign in *many* of our parishes, where they are *no less* destitute of the form, than of the power of godliness;

where the church doors are seldom opened on the Lord's day; where *three-fourths* of the children of ten or twelve years of age, cannot tell their letters. But these evils are diminishing; partly by Sunday schools, in some places; and partly by the village preaching, which the evangelical dissenters are setting forward in most of our counties; and in which, I, though not a dissenter, greatly rejoice, and daily pray for their success.

If the *official* shepherds know not to feed, or care for, either themselves or their flocks, I would be thankful that *others* are stirred up to supply their lack of service. I care not much for order, regularity, or commission, in such a case. When a house is on fire, people of any party or profession are welcome to bring water to extinguish it, whether churchmen, or kirkmen, elders, or ploughmen. When great awakenings take place among people grossly ignorant of the Scriptures, there are often extraordinary appearances. It was so among our first methodists, under Messrs. Wesley, Whitfield, Berridge, &c. It was so in the great revival in America, which began under Mr. Edwards; so likewise, at Kilsyth.

The Lord permits it, perhaps, for two reasons; *first*, these stirs engage the attention of the neighbourhood, and prompt many to hear, who, otherwise, would not; —*second*, there are those who *want* something to cavil at, and these things furnish the occasions they wish for, according to the prophecy, Isaiah viii. 14, 15. The light comes, but they who love darkness, think themselves justified in opposing the light, on account of these incidental blemishes, upon which, therefore, they are glad to expatiate.

Nay, the Messrs. —s, who were good men, were extreme bigots; and because *they* had left the kirk, they took it for granted, that the Lord had forsaken it likewise; and therefore, hastily concluded, that the work could *not* be his. I have heard that they fasted, and prayed the Lord to put a stop to it.

In the year 1799, he, incidentally, shows the rapid growth of *dissenters* in England, when he says: in London, tabernacles might be built in every street, without giving umbrage; and, indeed, places of that cast *are* springing up like mushrooms, frequently; but then, it is an *old* matter with us. When Mr. Whitfield and Mr. Wesley began, there was stir enough. People were alarmed, as if St. Paul's and the Monument were to be overturned; but these fears have been long since quieted.

I must, and do rejoice in the success of respectable itinerants, in places *sadly destitute* of the Gospel. I expect some mixture of human infirmity in the best designs of the best men; and Satan will be busy, when he feels his kingdom shaken. But the Lord will accept the intentions of his faithful servants, and overrule all things eventually for good. He will plead their cause, and put their enemies to shame and silence, if they simply and patiently commit it to him; but if they take it too much into their own hands, they usually make bad worse. The weapons of our warfare are *not* carnal. We should disclaim, not only fire and sword, but angry disputation and invective; for these, also, are carnal weapons. The Apostle says,—being *defamed*, we *entreat*.

Through mercy, there is some stir among the soldiers with us, and among the seamen in the navy. May the Lord confirm them, and increase their numbers!

In 1800, 1801, and 1802, Mr. Newton says: the account of your highland tour, is pleasant and interesting. I hear of *no such* sudden, general awakenings in our kingdom; but I hope the Gospel *does* spread, though more gradually and silently, especially in the establishment. Several very promising young men, are ordained in the course of the year; and the number of serious students, in both the universities, seems to be still increasing. I hope much good is likewise done by the dissenting itinerancy. But I fear the

savour of the good ointment is in some places injured, and its efficacy obstructed by the dead-fly of *politics*.

Hypothesis must give way to facts; otherwise, when I consider the letter, or the spirit of the Gospel, I should think it impossible that any persons, having the glory of God and the good of souls at heart, especially preachers, could perplex themselves, or their connexions, with political matters. I am sure neither Paul, nor his brother Peter, ever so intermeddled. From poison and politics, good Lord, deliver me. I think a *political* spirit as hurtful to the life of God in the soul, as poison is to the bodily frame.

I pray the Lord to bless you and *all* who love his name in Scotland, whether kirk, circus, relief, burghers, antiburghers, independents, methodists, or by whatever name they choose to be called. Yea, if you know a *papist* who sincerely loves Jesus, and *trusts* in him for salvation, give my love to him.

The religion that cometh from above, though founded upon doctrines, is *not* so much a string of sentiments, in a system, as a *new* nature, a *new* life. If a man be *not* born again, it signifies little, whether he be called a Calvinist, or an Arminian; whether he belong to church, or kirk, relief, circus, or tabernacle. He may have a name to live amongst his party; but he is dead, and incapable, as to spirituals, as the stones in the street. On the other hand, if he *be* born from on high, he is a new creature; and though he may, for a season, be under many incidental mistakes, the grace which has called him, will prevail over all, and teach him, in due time, all that the Lord sees needful for him to know.

Let us preach the deity and atonement of the Saviour; the influences of the Holy Spirit; the dreadful evil of sin, as exhibited in the sufferings of Christ, when treated as a sinner for our sakes; the new birth; and the nature and necessity of that holiness, which is an essential part of salvation, and without

which no man shall see the Lord. These points will accord with the feelings of all who are truly taught of God; and if in some things, they be otherwise minded, he will, in due time, reveal it to them if necessary. Thus he taught us, step by step, showing much patience and long suffering towards us, though we were dull scholars; and thus, may we learn of him to speak the truth in love.

To attack human depravity with philosophy, or fine sentiments, or by extolling morality, is fighting Goliath with a wooden sword. *Christ* was the subject of Paul's preaching; and no man did more good. One who preaches Christ should *know* him. Colleges can never make up the want of the knowledge of Christ. Without Christ, ministers may amuse their audience, perhaps send them away admiring the sermon; but Paul would have thought little of this. Paul warned *every* man; *sinner*s, of hell; of existing continually in misery, if they persisted in sin. He warned *good* men of their danger of being taken in the snare of the devil; thousands of unseen enemies surround us.

To present every man perfect, is *not* sinless perfection; the more grace a man has, the quicker sensibility he has about sin; nor is it the perfection of an angel, but of a child, who has all the parts of a man, but is not a man. A perfect Christian has *all* the parts of a Christian; faith, love, humility, &c. Some people confine their religion to devotional exercises, and lay great stress upon it; but these are *not* perfect Christians—this is only a *part* of Christianity. Some are offended, if the minister detect any defect in their character; but a Christian is thankful, when his defects are discovered to him.

The communion of saints *cannot* be easily made intelligible to the world; but a Christian in London can rejoice in the *conversion* of a man in the East Indies, whose face he never saw, nor ever expects to see, on earth. He can also feel for a congregation, when they have a faithful pastor removed from them by death:

though not personally acquainted with any one person in that congregation.

As illustrating the present low state of piety in England, notwithstanding its national church establishment, it may be noticed, that the late venerable Thomas Scott wrote his "Essays on the most important subjects in Religion," for the express purpose of counteracting the *prevailing* infidelity and scepticism; as well as to give a distinct view of the grand peculiarities, and excellent tendency of genuine Christianity.

According to Mr. Newton, there were *not* one thousand evangelical clergymen in the English church establishment, in the year 1801. What their number is *now*, I have not been able to ascertain exactly; but, probably, it does *not* equal the number of ministers ejected by the Bartholomew act of 1662; seeing, that if at the end of *sixty* years, from 1740 to 1800, less than one thousand evangelicals were found in the establishment; it is not likely that a greater *additional* number have been procured, during the last twenty years, in defiance of the frowns of the secular government; and in spite of the systematic persecution of the hierarchy.

God grant, that *such* clergy may increase; as the *only* means, under Providence, of averting the impending perdition of the Anglican state church!

In the month of October 1821, the Rev. Charles Simeon, when present at a meeting of the Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, held at Dorchester, in the county of Dorset, said: that there were then between *two* and *three hundred* young men, at the university of Cambridge, in training for orders, who attended upon his preaching and weekly lectures; and all of whom, he thought, were under serious impressions, and evangelically inclined.

This fact appears to augur well for the best interests of the church of England. But *how* are pious young men to obtain *preferment* in that secular esta-

blishment; more especially, under the *recently* augmented hostility of the British civil government, and its episcopal bench, generally, against all evangelism? An hostility quite natural in formal, unregenerate, ungodly men; whether laics or clerks. And hence, *formalism* has prevailed in the English church, from its first full introduction by Laud, and its entire consummation by Sheldon, to the present hour. During the whole of which period, formal, secular churchmen have, very steadily, received the protection and patronage of the state government; to the almost total exclusion of evangelical ministers.

Nor is this, in any way, marvellous; seeing, as bishop Burnet expresses himself, in his exposition of the twenty-fifth article, "the greater part, both of the clergy and laity, ever were, and ever will be, *depraved* and *corrupted*"; it being certain, that the far greater part of mankind is *always* bad, we must conclude, that the evil does so far preponderate the good, that they bear *no* comparison or proportion to one another." Now the men who have composed the British government, for the last two hundred years, have been, like those who have wielded the other governments of Christendom, very generally irreligious, unconverted, *unregenerate* men, notwithstanding their *regular* baptism. In general, the nearer to courts, the farther from Canaan; whatever fawning deans or bowing bishops think.

But the Scriptures tell us, the carnal or unrenewed mind is enmity against God, and the things of God, and the children of God; and, consequently, carnal, worldly, secular statesmen, ministers and sovereigns, would prefer *formalism* in their established clergy, because it checks no man's conscience, but allows him to live as he lists, without God in the world; to *evangelism*, which insists upon a holy life, as the *only* evidence of a living faith; alike in princes and politicians, as in the meanest citizens and subjects. A *sufficient* reason this, in itself, against a political alliance between church and state; because it *necessa-*

rily ensures an unevangelical, unreligious national clergy.

Nay, but in addition to the dark prospect of church preferment, *how* are Mr. Simeon's young evangelicals to obtain even *ordination* at the hands of a formal diocesan? For example, what pious protestant candidate could swallow the captious sophistry of the Peterborough questions; avowedly framed to stop the ingress of evangelism into the church of England? or digest the double justification of Dr. Tomline? or bolt the baptismal regeneration of Richard Mant?

But neither baptismal regeneration, nor double justification, nor Peterborough casuistry, nor any thing else, would prove the least impediment to the ordination of secular, formal, irreligious candidates. The doors of the Anglican Church establishment are *always* open for the admission of ministers, who are entire strangers to the grace of Christ; devoid of Christian knowledge; lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God; profane, caring for no man's soul; companions of the unholy; making a gain of godliness, and entering the state church from the most degrading motives, that they may revel and fatten upon its revenues; while their hearts are radically hostile to the sacred function which they assume: and to the evangelical doctrines of the church, which they plunder and disgrace.

Are *such* ministers calculated to promote piety, and prevent paganism, in a nation? calculated to bring man into a covenant of grace with his offended Maker, when they are themselves enemies to God by wicked works? Are the mere, careless repetitions of a form of prayer, and the hurried, heartless reading of a printed, or a borrowed sermon, to manifest the presence, and call down the grace of God, upon the attendants in a parish church? What an awful proportion of these episcopally ordained clerks still remain in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity; and go forth to take possession of the church benefices and

dignities; procured for them, either by money, in the way of purchase and barter, or by family connexions and interest, or by political influence and exertion; for *what*? only to counteract and destroy the beneficial tendencies of the Gospel, with whose precepts and principles, their whole secular lives are at variance; to swell the triumphs of infidel and wicked men; and to tread in the foot-tracks of that primitive bishop, who, *after* he had swallowed the sop, went out and betrayed the Lord of life.

Such being the condition and direction of the English ecclesiastical establishment, we are not surprised at the general prevalence of *infidelity* and irreligion in England, *now*, after nearly three hundred years trial of the experiment of a state church.

The proof of this awful and alarming state of things, in England, is taken from the most unexceptionable source. The Christian Observer deservedly bears a high character for talent, and learning, and various information. And, what is infinitely better, it is truly evangelical; and *as such*, esteemed by serious persons of all denominations in Christendom; and reviled, accordingly, by all the stoutest formalists, in these United States, as well as in England. It is, also, a stanch, able, and uniform advocate for the national Anglican Church, by law established.

A more estimable body of men, in all purity of doctrine, and holiness of life, than the evangelical clergy of the church of England, never adorned and blessed the earth. And, *as a body*, they are most conscientiously attached to the establishment of church and state, under which they have been born, and trained up, and live. Whence, *their* statements of the general condition of religion and morals in Britain, are entitled to the greater weight, because they bear directly against the usefulness of that very church establishment which they labour to uphold, and to extol. A witness is always competent to testify

in opposition to, though not in favour of his own interest.

Does the English established church, *as such*, encourage the efforts, now making in the British Isles, to evangelize the heathen; to diffuse the Gospel among seamen; to circulate the pure, unsophisticated word of God, without note, and without comment; to educate the universal poor of England and of Ireland?

Nay, but does not the far greater proportion of that state church, with all its complicated and cumbersome apparatus of archbishops, and bishops, and deans, and canons, and prebendaries, and archdeacons, and rectors, and vicars, and curates, frown upon, and execrate the British and Foreign Bible Society; the church, and other missionary institutions; the Bethel union; and every other effort made to evangelize and to instruct, either the home or the colonial population of Britain; as well as the inhabitants of foreign nations?

Is it *thus*, that the Anglican Church establishment promotes piety, and prevents paganism among the British people? *How many* English and Irish bishops are *now* members of the British and Foreign Bible Society? When the comparatively few prelates, that belong to that blessed institution, die, will their vacant seats be filled by their episcopal successors? or will that great national society be carried on in all its mighty and beatific operations, by *nonepiscopalian* denominations; as the American Bible Society is conducted in these United States? Are missions, at home and abroad; are the Bethel flags, and the education of the poor in elemental Christianity, to be consigned, *altogether*, to hands *other* than those of the established church of England?

And is *such* conduct calculated to seat an expensive and burdensome church establishment deep in the heart affections of the British people? or, does it directly tend to rouse their resistless indignation

against a *state machine*, whose constant operation it is to crush every effort made to promote the best, the immortal interests of the human race?

The evil tendency of *all* churches is to *formalism*, which extinguishes all spiritual-mindedness and practical piety. But *established*, national, state churches increase, and *perpetuate* this evil, by upholding, with the secular arm, the church walls, priesthood, and wages, when the religion is gone; and, also, by proscribing the growth of evangelism in other denominations, as well as in the dominant sect. Whereas, in *unestablished* churches, a general prevalence of formalism only depletes, and destroys the formal sect, without injuring the community at large; because other denominations are left at full liberty to build themselves up in strength; and to fill their places of worship, by faithfully preaching the pure Gospel, and by zealously discharging the important duties of the pastoral office.

If a church establishment *be* necessary to promote piety, and prevent heathenism, *why* is Ireland *now* so much *more* popish and paganish, than when she *first* experienced the blessings of her present protestant episcopal established church, about three hundred years ago?

In April 1822, sir John Newport called the attention of the English house of commons to the deplorable state of *Ireland*. During the debate, Mr. Charles Grant, the late secretary to the Irish viceroy, said: that various petty insurrections had agitated the peasantry of Ireland for the last *seventy* years. They generally arose out of local and casual circumstances. Their effect has been to render the Irish peasant, in a great degree, indifferent to all the danger and discomfort, the outrage, violence, and cruelty, which are the inseparable attendants upon popular commotion.

Without property, and with scarcely any of the comforts of home, he is ever ready to obey the summons to insurrection, in which he has *nothing* to lose; and the

personal danger of which, it has been his education, and his habit to despise. In this state of feelings, it is *not* wonderful, that the severe pressure of heavy rents, tithes, and taxes, general and local, should drive the peasantry to *despair*, and produce such scenes of disorder as have lately been witnessed in Ireland. Much in these evils is altogether beyond the power of the legislature to remedy.

Mr. Grant called upon the Irish land-owners, who spend the produce of their estates in other countries, to return to that station, and those duties, which nature had assigned them; to apply themselves to the honourable and imperative task of meliorating the condition of those, by the sweat of whose brow they lived. More was to be effected by them, in rendering the Irish people prosperous and happy, than could be done by a thousand votes or enactments of the British parliament. In considering what could, and *ought* to be done by government, he thought they should direct their attention to the improvement of the police and magistracy; to the revision of the *tithe* system; to the liberal support of schools; and to the *removal* of religious disabilities.

It would be well for the British people, if its government would profit by this sound advice of Mr. Grant; which, doubtless, *so far* as it goes, would materially benefit Ireland, if carried into effect; and in benefiting Ireland, strengthen the whole empire. But Mr. Grant, as an eminently pious man, knows full well, that no *effectual* remedy can be found for the evils of Ireland, but in the existence of an *evangelical* clergy; to reclaim her from the fatal errors of popery, and the gross darkness of heathenism. The continuance of a *formal* state church will neutralize and palsy every effort to produce a permanent melioration of the condition of the Irish people. Though, doubtless, the removal of tithes, and of religious disabilities, will be of service; by enabling *other* denominations to spread the Gospel; even if the established church shall *still* persist in stifling every ray of evangelical light.

It greatly behoves the British government to bear in mind, that the monarchy of England has been *once, already*, overthrown, by the mal-administration and mal-conduct of a formal state church.

The reader is referred to Mr. Steven's pamphlet, entitled, "Remarks on the present state of Ireland," for some very important information respecting the horrible condition of that fine country. He says, the vast number of parishes which are *without* any resident clergy, is an obvious hindrance to the progress of education, if not of piety; and cannot fail to involve the established church of Ireland in a solemn responsibility. It will scarcely be credited, that there is, at *this* very time, in one district, a space of *one hundred* square miles, in one of the finest counties of Ireland, in which there has neither been a *church*, nor a *resident* clergyman, within the memory of man.

But, say the nonresident, formal state clergy, we have *no* cure;—there are few or no protestants in the parish. Pray, gentlemen, have your popish parishioners no souls? And, since you do nothing, nor ever even see your parishes, I ask, in the name of reason, of religion, of common honesty, if you have *no* cure, why do you exact your *tithes*, to the uttermost farthing, from your popish parishioners? *Thus* it is, however, that a national church establishment promotes piety, and prevents paganism.

Mr. Steven says, that the papists, in strict accordance with their dark and deadly superstition, have, in some places, made outrageous opposition to the establishment of protestant schools. In one place, they burned an excellent school-house, and a master's dwelling-house; and afterwards, proceeded to *card* the master; in doing which they broke two ribs on one side, and one on the other; so that his life was despaired of. This diabolical process is effected by driving a number of nails through a board, in imitation of a *card*. They strip the object of their fury, and drag this instrument of torture up and down the bare back, till the ribs and

back bone are bared. Mortification and death frequently follow.

In a multitude of instances, the whole artillery of the popish church, *as far* as it is allowed in Ireland, has been opened on the unoffending parents, who dared to exercise the unalienable right of disposing of their children as they pleased. Numbers have, notwithstanding, exercised this right; fearless of the consequences, and, in face of threatenings the most appalling, have continued their children at the schools of the Hibernian Society; others, alarmed and terrified, with grief have confessed, that they must withdraw them. In spite of all obstacles, arising from the opposition of the popish clergy to the diffusion of instruction among the poor; and from the criminal indifference and negligence of the protestant established church; there is a growing desire in the Roman catholic peasantry of Ireland for the education of their children.

The extent of *papal* tyranny, exercised by the Romish priests, in Ireland, even now, in the nineteenth century, may be inferred from the following fact.

Not long since, an action was brought before judge Day, at the Cork assizes. The plaintiff was Donovan, a baker; the defendant, the Rev. Mr. O'Brien, popish priest of Clonakilty. A subscription had been ordered by this priest, to build a popish chapel. Donovan was required to contribute sixteen shillings and sixpence; which he paid. He was afterwards called upon for nine shillings more, which he also paid, but said he was very poor, and could not afford it. Soon after, the priest demanded sixteen shillings, which Donovan refused to pay. On going to mass, the following Sunday, O'Brien asked if he would pay the sixteen shillings; he answered, he was not able. "Then," quoth the priest, "I will settle you."

Donovan, terrified at this threat, sent, by his wife, sixteen shillings to O'Brien, who then refused to take less than two guineas. On the next Sunday, the priest *cursed*, from the altar, all who had not paid *his*

demands for building the chapel. Donovan went on the next holy-day to mass, and was formally *excommunicated*, and the people denounced as cursed and contaminated, *if* they should deal, or hold any communication with him. This menace was so effectual, that *not one* of the country people would sell a sod of turf to Donovan, to heat his oven, and he was unable to sell his flour on hand. Reduced to despair by his forlorn situation, he went to the chapel in a white sheet, and asked pardon of God and the priest, for his disobedience. O'Brien ordered him to come to his house, where he again demanded two guineas. But Donovan had *no* means of raising the money;—the excommunication was continued in full force; and he was obliged to shut up his house. The jury gave Donovan a verdict of fifty pounds damages.

The protestant episcopal state clergy of Ireland have, by their conduct, so well proved the position assumed, of the necessity of a national church establishment, to promote piety, and prevent heathenism, that now, after the experiment has been in full operation nearly three hundred years, popery and paganism have been *positively* doubled, and *relatively* quadrupled; while protestantism has proportionally declined. In justice, however, to the Hibernian state church, it must be acknowledged, that, during these three centuries, its clergy have been very punctual in exacting their tithes, and every other source of ecclesiastical revenue. They, doubtless, believing, that they have the *cure*, without the *care* of souls; as some physicians have the *care*, without the *cure*, of bodies.

The Christian Observer for February 1822, shows, that *England* herself is in no enviable condition, with regard to religion and morals, even at this advanced period of her national career; and after having enjoyed for so long a series of ages, all the benefits of a state church establishment.

In the Review of pamphlets on the *infidelity* of the times, and of Dr. Chalmers's Civic Economy, the

Christian Observer states—that a very considerable portion of English publications, for the last three or four years, has consisted of sermons, tracts, essays, reports of societies, magazines, and miscellaneous pamphlets, issued in consequence of the late alarm respecting the *increase* of infidelity and blasphemy. The recent public alarm has, indeed, abated, but the *causes* of English infidelity still remain. And the radical newspapers and pedlar's packs still continue to scatter the seeds of impiety and rebellion over all, even the remotest, corners of the country.

The Rev. J. Ramsay, of Scotland, in examining the *causes* of the prevailing infidelity, attributes it, in the first place, to the depravity of the human heart. A real, fundamental cause of unbelief, in *every* age; but which, the Christian Observer acknowledges, is *too little* considered by many, who profess to be exceedingly shocked at the recent explosions of infidelity. Whence, a list of cold arguments, in favour of the Gospel, is uttered from the press or pulpit; as if only the understanding, and not the heart, were concerned in the production of infidel opinions. Such arguments do little or nothing towards eradicating the evil. If the established clergy mean to banish infidelity from *their* parishes, they must go far deeper.

They must, however unfashionable and startling it may be to all clerical formalists, preach the Scriptural, the reformed, the protestant, the Anglican Church doctrine of *conversion*; must show their hearers plainly, and affectionately, their awfully lapsed condition by nature; the enormity and guilt of their offences before God; and the indispensable necessity of a real, radical transformation in the spirit of their minds. There are few *theoretical* infidels, especially among the poor, where *such* points of evangelical truth have been duly impressed upon their consciences. The meagre, tame, formal, half Christianity, which is always lingering upon the threshold of elements, and evidences, of order and ordinances; instead of beginning

with conversion, and going on to perfection; leaves the mind open and unguarded, to every infidel suggestion.

The preachers who either deny, or keep back the Scripture doctrine of human depravity, and original sin, do, in effect, *help forward* the scheme of infidelity. It is incumbent upon the English state clergy to learn, how essentially necessary is a knowledge of the extent of man's natural corruption, to the right inculcation, even of the most common *moral* virtues. Every evil being thus traced to its true source, the value and appropriateness of the Scripture remedies would be more fully felt; and, as with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness, with the *heart* would every minister begin, both in urging the truth, and in enforcing the spirit of Christianity.

Another cause of the present prevailing infidelity, is stated to be the extensive circulation of irreligious and seditious publications. Infidelity and rebellion are natural companions. Bible Christians are *not* apt to be disturbers of civil government. Hone, in his parodies, struck, alike, at the religion and the policy of England. And so, throughout the whole mass of blasphemous and seditious publications, lately steaming their hot infection from the British press, the principles of duty to God and to temporal rulers were indiscriminately assailed; and the book that inculcates them, was reviled and ridiculed. True Christians, they found, could *not* be seditious, in accordance with their professed principles; and the *religious* part of the poor was proof against all incitements to rebellion. The business of the English infidels, therefore, was to endeavour to put down the Bible; as preparatory to their subversion of the British government.

Christianity has been always assailed, ever since its first promulgation; but, of late years the opposition to it has been more injurious, because it has been spread over a larger surface. It is no longer confined to men of education, and *soi disant* philosophers;

but infidelity now appeals to the passions of the populace, and labours to array the physical against the moral force of nations. The antichristian efforts of the French infidels are well known; and the contagion spread into Germany, and other parts of continental Europe; and plays, novels, scientific journals, periodical publications, and children's books, were all pressed into the service of infidelity. In England, also, sedition and irreligion have had their numerous, and most audacious advocates, from Thomas Paine down to Carlile.

Another cause of the prevailing modern infidelity, in Scotland, Mr. Ramsay states to be, the defective religious and moral education of the *poor*. He says: the higher classes are trained up in the fear of God; and taught good morals, and an abhorrence of impiety and revolution. We presume, this must be *at home*, under the parental roof; for the Scottish colleges, and higher seminaries, have *not* been very remarkable, of late years, for inculcating the principles and precepts of Christianity.

But, however it may be in Scotland, the higher classes in England, are *not* so well instructed in religion, even as the half educated poor. *Very few* of the sons of the English nobility and gentry, at the great academical institutions, could contend successfully, upon the elemental points of Christianity, with the children of their father's tenants and labourers, at a well conducted national school. And be it remembered, that these great academical institutions are, *altogether*, under the control and guidance of the established Anglican Church clergy; who find their way from those seminaries, into the high benefices and bishoprics of the establishment; or, sometimes, *unite* in their own persons the academic masterships and the church dignities; as, for example, Dr. Huntingford is, at once, warden of Winchester college, and lord bishop of Hereford.

The *romantic* fondness acquired for the civil and

ecclesiastical establishments of England, at her public seminaries, is often *far* removed from an humble and ingenuous reception of the Gospel, as the rule of faith and practice. In *most* of the large English schools, whether for rich or poor, religious *knowledge*, not duty, is the object of instruction. A momentous consideration, *now*, that so large, and continually increasing a portion of the British population, is under the process of elementary education; for on the *character* of this widespread education, depends its good or evil. For the poor to be able universally to read, is *not*, necessarily, a benefit to themselves or others. The result must depend upon the way in which knowledge is acquired; upon the principles inculcated, and the habits formed, during its acquirement; and upon the ends to which it is directed.

To *know*, as a mere fact, who was Jesus Christ, will no more moralize, or Christianize the human soul, than to know who was Pharaoh, or Nebuchadnezzar. A *religious* education, the exigence of *these*, nay, of *all* times, demands. Whence, the immense importance of Sunday schools. The Christian Observer cites with approbation, some emphatic passages from a little pamphlet, lately published by the committee of the Sunday school society for Ireland. These passages fully prove, in spite of all the objections urged by the formal enemies to Sunday schools, in the English and Irish state church establishments, how much benefit these institutions have, already, actually conferred upon the population of those countries.

An education, of which religion is *not* the basis, only prepares the soil for the worst seed, and the growth of a poisonous crop, baneful to man, and offensive to God. A truly Christian education, such as is, generally, the substratum and the summit of Sunday school instruction, is the *best* possible, nay, the *only* guarantee, for the principles, the morals, and the good conduct, of the rising generation; amidst the many dangers, to which they are constantly exposed, in an age of free opinions,

and under the influence of a licentious press, perpetually inculcating infidel notions, and a revolutionary spirit.

After examining some other causes, assigned by Mr. Ramsay, for the present alarming prevalence of *infidelity* and profligacy, in Britain, the Christian Observer asks the following pithy, and pertinent questions.

Have *our* legislative and executive bodies been altogether free from blame? Has all been done, that *might* have been done, in *these* quarters, to check the progress of infidel and immoral principles? Have *new* churches been built equal to the increased wants of the population; or sufficient facilities and inducements afforded for building them? Have the public *patrons*, of *lay*, and *still more*, of *ecclesiastical* preferment, been sufficiently attentive to making *their* appointments an active check to the prevailing evils; and particularly, by nominating to the cure of souls, such men *only* as have deeply at heart, the eternal interests of mankind?

Has due care been taken to rescind every public law, or regulation, that tends to demoralize the people? Are the numerical items of our customs and excise deemed of *less* moment than the sober and virtuous habits of the community? Is the increase of the revenue by lotteries, dram-shops, and other polluted sources, felt by our public men, to be, *as it is*, a curse, not a blessing to the nation? Has the sleepless vigilance of parliament contrived and enforced adequate measures, for giving the *whole* mass of the people a plain Christian education? or, are many of them *still* left, as to all preventive legislative remedies, to the unmitigated influence of infidel and other mischievous publications? Have our *poor* laws, and our laws respecting various moral offences, been duly investigated, with reference to their bearing upon the principles and character of the people? But we forbear to press our queries.

The Christian Observer cites a splendid paragraph from Dr. Chalmers, in praise of the *erudition* of the

English church ; to the justice of which we most cordially assent ; because we fully believe, that, *as a body*, a more learned community has not appeared in Christendom, than the Anglican state clergy have shown themselves to be, ever since the blessed era of the Reformation, to the present hour. The Christian Observer adds some able remarks on the importance of a *learned* clergy, and on the high theological claims of the English church ; in which we mainly coincide. The following passages are recommended to the attention of the serious reader.

We know of no church which has equal claims, as far as the *exterior* defences of religion are concerned. Nor has she rendered less assistance to the right exposition and interpretation of Scripture. Her formularies are, perhaps, the best human exposition of Scripture ; exhibiting the strictest regard to truth, and the most marked spirit of toleration ; an exposition, which casts debatable points into the shade, and gives the highest prominence to the undebated principles of Christianity ; and, consequently, supplies a *common* ground, on which opposing parties may meet, and proceed forth, in the whole armour of God, to contend with the common enemies of their faith.

And if there has been, as we are bound to admit, a painful *abandonment* of these formularies, by many individuals ; there have *not* been wanting, at any time, and especially *now* there are not wanting, a large body of churchmen, true to the spirit and temper of the illustrious parent, from whose lips they draw the lessons of life ; and under whose banner they go forth to conflict with the world, the flesh, and the powers of darkness.

May the great Head of the church be graciously pleased to augment the number of these evangelical ministers in the Anglican establishment ; which *never* more needed the services of such men, than at *this* trying crisis of her career.

The Christian Observer, in the midst of his eulogies upon the erudition of the church of England,

does not forget, that *piety* must ever precede mere learning in all Christian efficacy and benefit. He considers it scarcely a matter of discussion, whether a *converted* be not infinitely more useful than an unconverted ministry. Very few unconverted persons ever preach the truth at all. And, even where doctrinally correct, a want of earnestness and feeling characterizes their labours, and diffuses itself, by sympathy, over their hearers. Besides, the lives of such preachers generally tend to neutralize or vitiate their reasonings. Above all, it is *only* to the honest, simple, believing minister of the word; to the preacher, devoutly seeking the assistance of the Holy Spirit, that any *promise* of such assistance is made; and it is, therefore, on *his* ministry alone, it can be expected ordinarily to fall.

The success of a hypocritical, formal ministry, is an exception, not a rule. The success of the true prophet is the rule, not the exception. If, therefore, the question be proposed, whether more is to be expected from *learned indifference*, or unlettered piety, in a minister; we no more hesitate to decide for the latter, than to prefer the fishermen of Galilee to the council of Trent.

Dr. Chalmers calls upon the Wesleyan methodists to adopt the *local* system, and carry the Gospel into every alley and cottage of Britain. And the Christian Observer admits, that the light and disposable force of that body supplies extraordinary facilities for such an enterprise; nay, would carry on the Cos-sac warfare proposed, better than would the heavy armed troops of the Anglican establishment. *Rather* than the work of moral reform, among the millions in Britain, now *without* any means of instruction, should *continue* to be neglected, we heartily desire to see it in the hands of the methodists, or of *any other* body, who will supply the state church's *lack* of service.

If it be *not* done by the establishment, perhaps no body would do it better than the Wesleyans. The

strictness of their discipline, their rigid system of inspection, their singular facilities of selecting the individuals best suited to the work; seem to constitute them, *if* the established church *hangs back*, suitable agents for so extensive an undertaking. But the business of *locality ought* to be taken up, in good earnest, by the national church; of whose formularies few complain, and the *revival* of whose discipline all desire. The Christian Observer implores the Anglican Church to *awake from her sleep of ages*; and to go forth for the recovery of *her* people from the depths of vice and ignorance, into which they have sunk.

The existing condition of the country, more especially of its immense metropolis, *cannot* be contemplated without horror. *Ten thousand* individuals have passed through a few principal prisons of London, in one single year. Myriads of children, in its courts and alleys, subsist *altogether* upon depredation. *Hundreds of thousands*, in spite of all the laudable exertions of the national, and other benevolent societies, are *still* destitute of Christian education. *Crime* has so mastered the *existing* means of improvement, that its circle continually widens, and deepens, on every side. The race of benevolence after sin and misery, is, at the *present* moment, that of the tortoise after the hare.

If the English people *now*, in the nineteenth century, be so irreligious and immoral, as thus represented by the Christian Observer; is it not conclusive, that the great body of the established clergy have been *long*, and are now, grossly negligent in the discharge of their all-important duties; have long been, and are now, any thing but faithful, zealous, efficient, evangelical preachers, and pastors? The facts and observations would apply still more forcibly to the conduct of the state clergy in Ireland. Scotland is directed by an ecclesiastical establishment, on a smaller and a simpler scale, less splendid, less imposing, less expensive, less burdensome to the community, than the Anglican and Hibernian hier-

archies; with what effect, in promoting piety, and preventing heathenism, may be the subject of future inquiry.

Is such an alarming state of irreligion and immorality, as now pervades England, a proof of the position assumed by Mr. Wilks, Mr. Wilberforce, Dr. Chalmers, the Christian Observer, and many other distinguished writers; that a state church is absolutely *necessary* to preserve religion alive in a country; and to prevent its inhabitants from degenerating into pagan darkness and idolatry?

In these United States, where *no* national church establishment exists, we certainly have no such widely spread infidelity and profligacy as, issuing from Hone, Cobbet, Carlile, and their disciples and followers, continually threaten to lay in blood and ruins all that is venerable and valuable in the British empire; and *must*, eventually, so destroy it, unless checked by a counter current of pure, evangelical piety. For mere legislative enactments, however seconded by fine, or imprisonment, or the gallows, or a formal, secular state clergy, slumbering in monkish apathy, and gowned ease, over the moral desolation of their country; can never do aught to *reform* a corrupted and rebellious people.

Let the *eleven thousand* places of worship in the Anglican Church establishment, be filled with evangelical incumbents; let the stalls, and dignities, and palaces be filled with evangelical deans, and bishops, and archbishops; all faithfully discharging their sacred duties, as ministers of the everlasting Gospel; and England will soon be freed from all alarm respecting the infidelity and profligacy, which now menace the speedy perdition of all her civil institutions, and social order.

Let it be remembered, likewise, that all this wickedness belongs emphatically to the establishment. It constitutes an integral part of the state church, which claims the *whole* nation as her own, excepting only those individuals, who, under the shelter of the tolera-

tion act, enrol themselves as members of some dissenting communion. But no evangelical dissenters will receive into their body any infidel, or immoral person; and if any member of their churches become immoral or infidel, he is forthwith expelled from their community, and returns into the mass of the nation, to furnish his quota towards forming the *general* character of the English protestant episcopal church, by law established.

Accordingly, the parliamentary *divorce* bills are *not* obtained by the evangelical dissenters of England, whether presbyterian, or congregational, or methodist, or baptist; but they are procured, in countless numbers, by the noble and the gentle, the titled and the untitled *patrons*, protectors, and supporters of the Anglican Church establishment. And so, of other flagitious crimes, as theft, robbery, rebellion, forgery, murder, conspiracy, assassination; these do *not* find their perpetrators and abettors, among the dissenting evangelicals; but among the stanch members of the church of England; who, while they are convulsing society to its centre, by their crimes and villanies, rail against separatists, and sectaries, and schismatics, with all the rancour of a formal bishop.

No; a nation is *not* evangelized by a secular state church, but by real, vital Christianity; not Christianity corrupted and darkened by popish superstition, or diluted and debased by cold-blooded, heartless philosophism, or interwoven with national establishments for political purposes; but Christianity as taught in the New Testament, and practised by the faithful followers of their Lord and Master.

Doubtless, the outward profession of nominal Christianity, is, in numberless instances, adopted by worldly men, nay, by determined infidels, to forward their own schemes of policy. Finding the bulk of the people inclined to the Christian religion, under some particular form of church order, or discipline; they deem it political wisdom, to give this particular sect a state establishment, and to allow its clergy a

share in the civil government. Hence, religion is converted into a mere engine of state policy; and the established church, as a matter of course, filled with a formal, secular, irreligious, persecuting clergy.

The politician may plume himself upon his own sagacity and skill; and the clergy may be delighted with their worldly honours, and their immense revenues; and the people themselves may be so uneducated, and so ignorant, as to receive churchmanship in lieu of Christianity; but deep and deadly gashes are inflicted upon pure and undefiled religion. Hence, the church, at an early period, ceased to be the bride of Christ; and became the mother of harlots, the *established* protector and promoter of all iniquity and abomination. Whatever good may be done in such communities, is done, *not* in consequence, but *in spite* of their ecclesiastical establishments; is done by pious individuals, acting in direct contradiction, if not in open opposition, to the whole course and current of the state church.

A large proportion of every nation, if it suits their temporal convenience, adopt the prevailing religion; or, in other words, have *no* personal religion. More especially, the courts and cabinets of kings and princes, notwithstanding Christianity may have been the established religion of the land, have been generally filled by a far greater proportion of mere worldly formalists, if not of open and avowed infidels, than of evangelical Christians; and, in consequence, the public measures, both of state and church, have taken a corresponding direction. Nobility, and gentry, and courtiers, and politicians, are very apt to consider religion, as an affair quite beneath the consideration of their rank, and wealth, and fashion, and wisdom; as a matter, suited only to the poor, and vulgar, and uninstructed, and ignorant. *They*, therefore, either absent themselves altogether from public worship; or, only attend on state occasions, to save appearances towards the national church esta-

blishment, of whose *patronage* they are themselves the great proprietors; and whose bishoprics and benefices they allot as easy and splendid provisions for the younger branches of their own families.

It cannot fail, whenever *any* particular Christian denomination is adopted by the secular government, as the established state sect, but that numbers of unprincipled, wicked men, will profess themselves stout members of the dominant communion; and help to corrupt and degrade its character. Hence the pure Gospel scheme is thrust aside, to make way for some more accommodating worldly system; the holy precepts of Christian morality are lowered to the corrupt standard of ordinary practice; and the worship and ordinances of Christ are debased by superstition, and modelled to suit the prevailing views of political rulers. Thus judaism was corrupted by the formal pharisees; and Christianity overlaid by the papal hierarchy.

To sum up the whole of the preceding argument, in a few words; *if* Christianity, during the first three centuries of its existence, spread on all sides, and flourished; not only without the aid, but against the determined hostility and persecution of the secular government; and *if*, after it was welded into the state it became carnal and corrupted; *if*, to use the words of one of the foremost of all living divines, the policy of Constantine, which secularized her form; his profusion, which corrupted her virtue; and the meretricious attire, which banished her modesty, prepared her for rapid infidelities to her Lord, and for her final prostitution to the *Man of Sin*; and *if*, from the fifth century may be dated that career of shame, which, particularly in the western empire, she ran, with wild incontinence, through the night of the dark ages, until she was branded from above, as the *mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*:

If, after the experiment, during the long period of nearly three hundred years, of a protestant episcopal state church, Ireland is now *more* heathenish, and

more popish, than in the time of Elizabeth—*if*, after the same protracted length of experiment, in England, there be more evangelical religion and vital piety *out* of, than *in* the national church establishment—*if* the Anglican state church has always been, to the extreme extent of her power, a *persecuting* church; persecuting the dissenters without mercy and without measure, so long as the cruel and iniquitous enactments of her legitimate heads, and sanctimonious pontiffs, Elizabeth, and the four Stuarts, permitted; and, *now* that the toleration act of William rescues the nonconformists from her fangs, persecuting by suspension, by calumny, by famine, the evangelical clergy within the pale of her own communion:

And finally, *if*, during the period of the Anglican church establishment's greatest power and influence, to wit, from the restoration of the infamous and execrable Charles, down to the middle of the eighteenth century, *infidelity* and profligacy were constantly widening their horrible circle in Britain;—and if the English state church has *always* laboured, and does *now* labour, incessantly, to oppose, and crush every *revival* of pure, undefiled, Scriptural Christianity, in her own bosom, and among her own children; *how* do her advocates prove the *necessity* of a national church establishment, in order to promote piety and prevent paganism in a country?

Nay, but the voice of universal history, and of all human experience, proclaims, in the loudest and most intelligible language, that it is very possible to have a national church establishment, *without* religion; as it is quite certain a people may have religion, *without* a national church establishment. And the irresistible inference is, that if evangelism *be* flourishing in England, it flourishes there *not* in consequence, but *in spite* of her established church. In like manner as *if* the British empire be flourishing in its agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and general concerns, it flourishes *in spite*, and *not* in consequence, of her enormous public debt, and her most oppressive burden of universal taxation.

CHAPTER II.

On the Anglican Church Establishment.

PERHAPS the most extraordinary portion of Mr. Wilks's book, is that in which he adduces the *low* condition of religion in these United States, as, at once, a proof and an illustration of his main position; that a national church establishment is *necessary* to preserve a Christian country from lapsing into heathenism.

In pages 78—83, of "Correlative claims and duties," Mr. Wilks says—that the case of the United States of America, furnishes another strong negative example on this subject. There is nothing like a regular and adequate *state* provision for the Christian instruction of the people in any part of the Union; and the effects of this deficiency are but too visible in the *languishing* state of religion, in *most* parts of that extensive territory. Yet even in the United States themselves, partial legislative enactments, in favour of religion, have been, from time to time, found necessary; which enactments, the civil magistrate is bound to support, and the public purse to carry into effect.

From a table, drawn up a few years since, showing the provision for religious instruction, in the states of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Vermont, and Kentucky, it appears, that ten out of fifteen of these states, have *no* provision for the maintenance of religious instructors; but the other five have a partial, or full provision. Eight have no religious creed; the others use a formal *test*; namely, three require a belief in God; one, faith

in the Gospel; two, faith in the Old and New Testaments; four, faith in the protestant religion.

To this add, that chaplains are appointed for the army and navy, and paid from the public purse; and strict orders are issued, under severe penalties, for the attendance and decent behaviour of the soldiers at divine worship. Profane cursing and swearing are also punishable. Thus the United States of America, without *verbally* allowing of church establishments, and though thinking it unconstitutional, to speak of the Divine Providence, in their united capacity, as some of the states may not acknowledge such a doctrine; yet have felt, *in practice*, the absolute necessity of acting upon some of the most contested principles, upon which national church establishments are founded; and individual states have gone even further.

That there is *so little* religion throughout the Union is *not* to be wondered at, when, in addition to other causes which have considerable influence, we recollect how scanty and parsimonious are the public means of instruction in almost every state; but that little would probably have been *less*, had there been no publicly recognized means at all.

But America is a new country; and some years must elapse before the general effect of its *present* system can be fully developed. It is devoutly to be hoped that *long before* that period shall arrive, the *necessity* of a church establishment will be sufficiently felt among *all* classes, to induce the legislature to carry into effect some adequate provision for that purpose; if not on the higher ground of *duty*, as Christians, and from an anxious concern for their own souls, and those of their countrymen; yet, at least, on the principles of political expediency, and civil decorum.

It would be more difficult, than, perhaps, Mr. Wilks imagines, on such an assumption, to determine *which* should be the dominant state sect. Certainly it would *not* be the American-Anglo-Church; and the

political precedence could not easily be settled among the presbyterians, congregationalists, methodists, and baptists.

Mr. Wilks cites the British Review of Mr. Warden's book, as materially aiding his own chief position. The Reviewer says: all our readers are aware, that in the United States of America there is *no* established church; but we are perfectly convinced, that were they familiar with the *real* situation of that extensive country, in regard to the *means* of Christian knowledge, they would *not* approve of the experiment, of which these federated republics have set the first example, of leaving that important concern to the discretion or caprice of the multitude. In some of the states, it is left entirely to the option of the people, whether they shall have clergymen and churches at all; or whether, with the name of Christians, they shall live like the rudest islander in the Pacific ocean; and it gives us pain to remark, that in the *southern* parts of the Union, the Sabbath is never sanctified by a large majority of the inhabitants; and the rites of our most holy faith are scarcely ever practised.

In the northern states, indeed, more attention is paid to the ordinances of religion. A tax, for the support of a certain number of ministers and chapels, is levied in all the New-England states, the amount of which is divided among the several denominations of Christians, according to the number of churches which they keep open for public worship. Now, inasmuch as this tax is compulsory, it *recognizes* the principle upon which establishments are founded; namely, a power in the government to provide for religious instruction and public worship; a principle completely at variance with Mr. Warden's maxim, that religion is one of the natural wants of the human mind; and in an enlightened age requires *no* aid from the civil magistrate.

Laissez nous faire, is a good rule for practical men, who preside over manufacturing and commercial in-

dustry ; but in reference to those grand institutions, calculated to form the public mind, and implant moral principles ; to preserve the purity of our faith, and to keep the soul true to its great Author ; it is more prudent to be guided by experience, than by any abstract theory of political economy. We are borne out in this opinion by the *real* condition of the United States, in the matter of religion. We find in Mr. Warden's own pages a statement, founded upon some investigations and calculations of the Rev. Mr. Beecher, which affords the melancholy intelligence, that out of *eight* millions, the computed amount of the American people, *five millions* of persons are destitute of competent religious instruction.

Assuming that there ought to be a clergyman for every *thousand* souls, the proportion in Great Britain is *one* minister to eight or nine hundred souls, (*not* in the established, or state churches,) Mr. Beecher assures us, that in Massachusetts there is a deficiency of one hundred and seventy-eight competent religious teachers. In Maine, only half the population is supplied with religious instruction. In New-Hampshire, the deficiency is one-third. Vermont is nearly in the same situation. In the western parts of Rhode Island, embracing a territory fifty miles long, and thirty broad, and including half the population, there is but *one* regularly educated minister ; and but ten in the other parts.

In Connecticut, out of two hundred and eighteen congregational churches, thirty-six are vacant ; and of all other denominations, sixty-eight are vacant. In New-York the actual number of pastors is about five hundred ; its population of a million requires double that number. In New-Jersey there is a deficiency of at least fifty pastors. In Pennsylvania and Delaware, the deficiency is very considerable. Virginia, with a population of 974,000, has but *sixty* regular ministers ; consequently *nine hundred and fourteen thousand* persons are *without* adequate religious instruction. The situation of Maryland is si-

milar to that of Virginia. North Carolina, with a population of 555,500, requiring 550 clergymen, has but *twenty*. South Carolina, which, with a population of 400,000, ought to have 400 pastors, has but *thirty-six*. The state of Georgia has but *ten* clergymen.

So far Mr. Wilks and the British Review. It is, to be sure, an unquestionable verity, that Dr. Beecher has given a very doleful view of the condition of religion in these United States. And, from his assumptions, the reverend calculator concludes, that unless some effectual effort be made to diffuse the light of Christianity throughout the Union, by the time we have *seventy* millions of people, *sixty-four* millions of them will be *without* any religious ordinances. In consequence of which, all the best political institutions of the country, will fall an easy sacrifice to the corrupt preponderance of infidel votes; those people being the worst of all abandoned profligates, who live in a Christian community, but live in the habitual neglect, contempt, and rejection of the Gospel.

Of this *last* position there can be no doubt. But a large deduction is to be made from Dr. Beecher's calculations; so far, at least, as relates to their fatal augury for the future. He counts only *regular* clergy; all the rest go for nothing with him. By regular clergy, however, he does *not* intend, as do our high church formalists, to designate merely the *episcopal* priesthood, for this profound and celebrated Connecticut divine, is himself a stout congregationalist; but such only, as have been regularly trained to the ministry of reconciliation, at some academic institution, or college; whether at Harvard, Princeton, Yale, or elsewhere.

Now, within the limits of this calculation are *not* included *all*, even of the independent, presbyterian, and episcopal clergy, throughout the Union. And they do *not* comprehend *any* of the three thousand irregular baptist preachers; the one thousand travelling, and the four thousand local preachers, among the methodists:

state clergyman to each thousand souls. Indeed, by adding the dissenting ministers, eleven thousand clergy more may be joined to those in the establishment; giving twenty-two thousand religious teachers to twelve millions of people, or one minister to five or six hundred souls. But the formal high churchmen do *not* allow any of these nonepiscopal ministrations to be valid or regular. They are *all* unauthorized and uncovenanted. Nevertheless, there is *no* assignable proportion between the evangelical labours of the whole aggregate of the dissenting and the established clergy; nor between the total amount of practical piety and moral conduct, in their respective congregations.

Without intending to institute any invidious comparison, or to lean unnecessarily against the character and conduct of the English national clergy, I may be permitted to observe, that *none* of the American ministers, not even the most formal of them all, live the *secular* life, or wear the *worldly* appearance which designate so large a portion of the reverend clerks, in the English state church establishment. In this country we have *none* of those ministers, one half 'squire, and the other half *not* clerical; horse-jockeys, gamblers, sportsmen, dancers, drinkers, profane swearers, and the like; men who live the life, and die the death, of mere ungodly worldlings.

The American clergy do *not* mix up secular employments with their professional occupations; they are neither yeomanry captains, nor commissioners of excise, nor country justices. They are all at least decorous in their exterior deportment; and a very large majority of them preach, faithfully and effectually, the distinguishing doctrines of the Cross; the evangelical doctrines of the Reformation; and enjoy, *most deservedly*, a very high degree of influence, in the respect and attachment of the community at large; and more especially, of their own congregations and churches.

Now, this *cannot* be said, in respect to the generality of the English *state* clergy; the great body of whom neither preach the Gospel, nor possess the respect of the community, nor enjoy the affection of their parishioners; from whom, indeed, they receive little else save *tithes* and *execrations*. Hence, throughout the United States, pure, evangelical religion is *much more* generally diffused, than in the English church establishment; and the standard of morals is higher. We have, in proportion to our population, *much less* infidelity and profligacy; *fewer* divorces, robberies, murders, tumults, insurrections and assassinations, than are to be found among the legitimate members, and stoutest supporters of the Anglican and Hibernian national church establishments.

The American-Anglo-Church herself has, *at length*, followed the example of other religious denominations, and established a *general* theological seminary, for the instruction of her divinity students. An account of the origin and progress of *this* school of theology, would furnish an interesting and instructive chapter in the history of religion, in these United States: *sed nunc, non est his locus*. It is to be hoped, that, in future, the American-Anglo-Church will, as much as possible, guard alike against all diocesan usurpation and division; and move onward to its great object, as one united community, acting in universal concert for ecclesiastical purposes.

The *other* principal religious denominations in the United States, are all making conjoined efforts to forward the course of the Gospel; more especially, by promoting the cultivation of evangelical theology.

For example, the congregationalists have a very flourishing, and munificently endowed, theological seminary at Andover, in Massachusetts; the methodists, one in the western part of the state of New-York; the baptists have instituted a divinity college at Washington, in the district of Columbia; the Dutch church has a school of the prophets at Bruns-

wick, in New-Jersey; the presbyterians have a theological hall at Princeton, also in Jersey. In May 1821, the general assembly of the presbyterians, and the general synod of the associate reformed church, passed a resolution, *uniting* the judicatories of the two churches, and joining the associate theological school in the city of New-York, to the presbyterian seminary at Princeton. This resolution was confirmed in May 1822; and these two important evangelical bodies are now consolidated into one general communion. Mr. Wilks himself acknowledges, that the English state clergy have *no* regular theological education.

To all this, add the felicitous harmony of many of the nonepiscopalian evangelical churches; as the presbyterian, the Dutch, and the congregational; in exchanging pulpits, in meetings for prayer and Christian conference, in missionary institutions, in Bible societies, in Sunday school associations, in the distribution of religious tracts; in a word, their cordial *union* in every effort to promote the blessed progress of evangelism; both among their own fellow-citizens, and the perishing millions of the heathen, in foreign, and far distant lands.

The apostolic William Ward, in his "Farewell Letters," bears his full and decided testimony to the exertions, and religious harmony of evangelical Christians, in these United States. He says: the number of religious institutions in America, *exceeds*, if possible, those of England.

Observe, Mr. Ward does *not* confine these religious institutions to a comparison, in number with those of the Anglican Church establishment; but includes *all* denominations in England, dissenters, as well as churchmen. Now, although Mr. Ward's assertion is strictly *true*, yet it is taking stronger ground, than is required by my *present* argument; which has merely to combat the assumed *necessity* of a national church establishment, to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in a country. For, most assuredly, the established church of Eng-

land *cannot* claim the merit of promoting that dissenting piety, which, *as a state church*, she has, invariably, calumniated, and persecuted, to the utmost of her power.

Mr. Ward proceeds to say : that Bible, Missionary, Tract, and Sunday school societies, are very numerous. The American Bible Society is a noble institution, doing great good. The orphan asylum, at New-York, has been favoured with such remarkable instances of the Divine care, as to remind one very strongly of the institution of professor Frank, in Germany. The deaf and dumb asylum, at Hartford, Connecticut, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Gallaudet, prospers exceedingly. I spent some hours at the asylum, enjoying a flow of feelings so sacred, and so refined, that I can never lose the recollection of this visit.

Regular prayer meetings, confined to females, are very common in America; which has, also, some institutions that I have not heard of in other countries. At Boston, and at other places, a *missionary* for the town and neighbourhood is maintained and employed; his work is to carry the Gospel to the poor; to preach in cellars, in garrets, and amongst those who, by their poverty, or peculiar circumstances, or disinclination, are excluded from the public means of grace. I met two or three of these interesting missionaries.

Societies of ladies exist for assisting poor Christian students, by purchasing cloth, and making them clothes. Other ladies unite to work together, one day in a week, fortnight, or month, devoting the produce to some good object. One of the parties reads for the edification of the rest. Separate societies, of girls and boys, are numerous; they have their meetings, and devote a quarter, half, or whole dollar a year, each, to some Christian object. In Mr. Payson's church, at Portland, a number of married females have associated, under a solemn engagement, that the survivors will seek the *spiritual* good of the

children, from whom any mother in this association may be removed by death.

The different denominations in this country come together in delightful *harmony*, and co-operate, without the obstruction of those impediments, which exist in *other* countries. The Sunday School Union in New-York, exhibits a noble specimen of true Christian feeling; and flourishes accordingly. I found *more* places of worship in the large towns in America, than in similar towns in Britain, (including *both* established and dissenting churches,) and *much* genuine piety among the presbyterians, the congregationalists, the evangelical episcopalians, the methodists, and the baptists; and, as far as my journeying extended, I observed a cheering exhibition of Christian progress.

As in England, *all* denominations of *real* Christians are increasing; and all are growing better. The *revivals* in different sections of the Union are greater than ever. I have made special inquiry into the nature of these revivals, and find, that the far greater portion of those who commence a religious profession under these impressions, continue till death to adorn the doctrine of Divine influence.

Christian *missions* too, begin to be more and more popular; and the duty of the church to identify them as an integral part of its institutions, begins to be more generally felt and acknowledged in this highly favoured country. What a cheering sight it was, on the 9th of March, 1821, to see coach and waggon loads of missionaries coming into Princeton, on their way to the Indians! The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them. And how still more astonishing that these Indians should be made willing to devote to the education of their children all the dollars paid to them, in annual instalments, for lands, by the government of the United States.

Blessed be God! the appearances in all Christian countries indicate, that we are rapidly passing into a new order of things. Indeed, all the great events of

our own times seem but the harbinger of *his* appearance, who is the desire of all nations.

After visiting the states of New-York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, Maine, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, &c., and the cities of New-York, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore, I was quite *amazed* at the progress of society in the United States: these towns, these colleges, these courts of justice, these scientific and benevolent institutions, the extent of country cultivated, these state governments, this army, this navy, this powerful general government! Why, my dear brother, when I considered that the other day this whole continent was forest, the exclusive abode of half naked savages and wild beasts; all this scenery appeared before me as the effect of enchantment. What a striking contrast to the deathlike paucity of society among the Indians on the same spot, during the preceding five hundred years.

In passing through Connecticut, I could not but observe, the country *must* be happy, in which the poor can obtain the respectable education of their children for nothing; where each man of good character, without regard to his *sect*, can become a legislator; where provisions are exceedingly cheap; where, except in particular towns, taxes are few; where there are *no tithes*, nor the galled feelings arising from the *unwise* elevation of *one* part of the people, on a religious account, over the other part; and where the people, (by their *delegates* and *representatives*, as in the legislature, whether state or general,) as I had just seen them in Boston, meet in convention, to amend the constitution of the state, with the same good humour, as men go to the annual meeting of the Humane Society in London. I saw several baptist ministers in this convention; as well as among the legislators of the state of Maine.

Religious services are conducted nearly as in England; but our custom of lining out the hymn scarcely exists; and singing is often profanely abandoned to the

choir, as though praise may be done by proxy ; or the object of Christian worship be partial to such tunes as the congregation cannot acquire. How any one can blame cathedral worship as popish, and admire these exhibitions in the front gallery, I know not. Notes, entreating the prayers of the congregation for the sick, &c. are, in many places, sent up into the pulpit ; and directed by these notes, the ministers visit the sick during the week.

Reading the Holy Scriptures does *not* commonly, I regret to say, make a part of the (*nonepiscopal*) services of the sanctuary. Dr. Watts, generally, supplies the forms of praise to the American people. There are some selections, the greater part, however, the composition of Watts, by Drs. Dwight, Livingston, and Worcester, and Mr. Winchell. American editions of Dr. Rippon's selection are not uncommon. The *reading* of sermons prevails to a considerable degree among the congregational, and other ministers. The services are often concluded with a doxology, the people standing. Blacks are members of the same churches, and sit down to the Lord's table with the whites.

Divine service seemed well attended in the states I visited ; and among the presbyterians, congregationalists, and baptists, there are but few instances of a dry, *formal* ministry ; though *much* of it still remains among the episcopalians. Among the baptists there is a considerable portion of *that* Calvinism, which knows *not* how to unite duty with sovereignty, obligation with privilege, watchfulness with perseverance, and the necessity of prayer with Divine influence. A baptist church, practising open, or *Christian* communion, I found not ; and one or two ministers did not hesitate to avow, that they did *not* consider pedobaptists within the pale of the *visible* church ! Is it not strange that the people, who still loudly complain that the baptists were imprisoned, and flogged, at Boston, should themselves act upon a senti-

ment so utterly contrary to Christian forbearance and charity?

The editor of the Christian Herald, for June 1822, brings together the opinions of four truly Christian divines, of four several denominations, in favour, and in explanation of real, evangelical *church unity*; to wit, an American presbyterian, and an English baptist, independent, and episcopalian, respectively.

The Rev. Dr. Proudfit, a distinguished clergyman among the American presbyterians, says: the *unity* of the church does *not* consist in the attachment of all its members to the *same visible* communion. It rather consists in the recognition of each other, as brethren and sisters, in the same *spiritual* family; in cherishing reciprocal affection; in esteeming others better than ourselves; in interchanging offices of kindness; in ministering to the temporal and spiritual comfort of each other, and *walking together*, as opportunity offers, in *all* commandments and ordinances of Jehovah.

Two professors may appertain to *different* sections of the visible church, and yet, by loving one another, by forbearing with the imperfections of each other, by mingling occasionally in the exercises of divine worship, private and public, must be considered, in the most emphatic sense, as keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And two professors may be connected with the *same* visible communion, and yet be alienated in heart, be sundered in their interests and aims, be defaming each other, and thus be chargeable with rending the mystical body of Christ.

The bond of union to the former professors, is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, the Head, who dwells in his living members, of all countries and ages, enlightening, and sanctifying, and supporting them, and is lasting as eternity; to the latter, the *only* bond of union is the ecclesiastical pale, which

encloses them ; and may be dissolved by the accident of an hour.

The Christian Herald then cites other passages on the same subject, from other quarters : not merely, as he says, to show a kind and friendly disposition in the representatives of *four* different denominations ; but also, to show how many are making the discovery of a mystery, which, for ages, had not been made known ; and, indeed, was as great a mystery, as was, in still earlier ages, the predicted union of the Gentiles with the Jews. Time brought to light, in the days of the Apostles, a mystery hidden for ages ; and the Gentiles became the children of Abraham, by love and faith ; without circumcision ; without sacrifice ; as unexpectedly, as gloriously. So, each denomination has had the mystery of *Christian union*, concealed from its prejudiced eye ; *each* has expected, eventually, to embosom in her pale all the rest ; but *now*, each begins to apprehend that mysterious union, in which men *agree to differ*.

Mr. Ward, in one of his "Farewell Letters," says : I am more than ever anxious to know no man after his *sect* ; to know no man as an independent, an episcopalian, a presbyterian, a methodist, or a baptist. I would say of *every* one who wears the image of Christ, and contributes to improve the spiritual desert around him, and of *no one else* ; the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother. What a sad thing, that while our Lord Jesus Christ loves his people, because they bear *his* image ; the cause of our attachment should be, that they belong to *us*.

I am told some episcopalians apologize for *not* engaging in foreign missions, by saying, it is unnecessary for *us* to spend our strength in this work ; *all* must come to *us* at last. I hear another say, I pray for the success of those, who are ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. A methodist is too apt to conclude, that almost all the energy of piety in the world is in *his* connexion. Another sect finds every body of professing Christians so corrupt, that they cannot aid *any* of them.

The baptist, as he walks through a town, points to the churches and chapels, and says—all these are to become baptist meeting-houses; Jesus Christ and his Apostles were all baptists.

Now we see, at present, the kingdom of Christ given to *none* of these *exclusively*; and *all* will be disappointed; and yet, not one atom of truth will be lost; not one atom of error will be spared. The world is *not* to be conquered by *our* favourite sentiments, but by the spirit or mind of Jesus Christ *in us*; the kingdom is to be given to the *saints* of the Most High. The world is to be conquered, neither by argument, nor by popular talents; but by Christ, the Christ on Calvary, *in us*; by the energy of piety, of Christian philanthropy; that pities, that weeps, that plunges into the thickest danger, to rescue the sinking. Does *any* sect wish to engross to *itself* the work of renovating the world? the *only* way is to engross *all* the vital godliness in the world; and *then* it will succeed; the Saviour seeketh *such* to serve him.

The Rev. William Jay, a celebrated minister among the English independents, in his remarks on the narrative of the Rev. John Clark, says: as the subjects of Divine grace, under *all* the denominations that distinguish us, we belong to *one* family; and are *therefore* much more intimately related, than the votaries of *any* party can be united. If I am a *real* Christian, whether an episcopalian, a dissenter, or a methodist, I am *your* brother, in the highest sense God himself affixes to the term; hence, you are *not* at liberty to determine how you shall feel and behave towards me; you are *bound* to love me; and without this love, your religion is a dream.

If God has promised *unity* among his own followers, we have reason to believe that it *has* been accomplished. But we see men, *equally* led by the spirit of God, and devoted to his will, differing from each other on numberless subjects. So it always has been, and always will be. Religion is *not* injured by it; nor has the Scrip-

ture spoken in vain. It never intended any thing more than unity with variety; an accordance in great, a difference in little things. If communities or individuals pursue an *uniformity* of opinions, ceremonies, discipline, forms and modes of worship, they first seek what is *impossible*; for the attempt has been fairly made, and has proved useless; men may as well be constrained or persuaded into a uniformity of stature, complexion, temper.

And secondly, they seek what would be *unprofitable*. The advantage lies in the present state of things. The cultivation of such dispositions, and the practice of such duties as the exercise of humility, forbearance, self-denial, candour and brotherly love implies, are far more valuable and useful than a dull, stagnant *conformity* of notions or usages. It is awfully possible to be very strenuous about the mint, anise and cummin, and neglect the weightier matters of the law; to contend for the *forms*, while destitute of the power of godliness.

Mr. Jay cites the late excellent John Newton, as saying: the true *unity* of spirit is derived from the things in which those, who are taught and born of God, *agree*; and should not be affected by those in which they differ. The church of Christ, collectively, is an army; they serve under one prince, have one common interest, and are opposed by the same enemies. This army is kept up, and the place of those daily removed to the church triumphant, supplied, *entirely* by those, who are rescued and won from the power of the adversary; which is chiefly effected by the Gospel ministry.

This consideration should remind ministers, that it is highly improper to waste much time and talent, which ought to be employed against the common foe, in opposing those, who, though they cannot exactly agree with them in every smaller point, are perfectly agreed, and ready to concur with them, in promoting their principal design. When I see ministers of acknowledged piety and respectable abilities, very

busy in defending or confuting the smaller differences, which already too much separate those, who ought to be of one heart, and of one mind, though, while they are fallible, they cannot be exactly of one judgment; I give them credit for their good intention, but cannot help lamenting the misapplication of their zeal, which, if directed into another channel, would probably make them much more successful in converting souls. Let us sound an alarm in the enemy's camp, but not in our own.

What a mortifying *contrast* to these truly catholic sentiments do the *exclusive* churchmanship and sectarian bigotry of a large portion of the English established clergy exhibit, through their various mouth-pieces; of which the chief seems to be archdeacon Daubeney. And sorry am I to see how blindly some of the American-Anglo-Church divines tread in this same sheep-track of fatuity; and how stoutly they protest against *all* co-operation and intercourse with nonepiscopalians, in matters "*purely religious*."

About the year 1797, Mr. Wilberforce published "A practical view of the prevailing religious system of professed Christians, in the higher and middle classes of England, *contrasted* with real Christianity." This excellent and eloquent book was, in itself, little calculated to awaken the bitterness of party polemics. It breathes peace and good will towards *all* who believe in Revelation; and though frankly avowing the author's attachment to his own particular sect, it treats others, not only those of different Christian denominations, but also deists and Socinians, with peculiar moderation and gentleness. In recompense for which, that arch Socinian radical, Gilbert Wakefield, poured out upon him a flood of his wonted scurrility and calumny.

The main object of Mr. Wilberforce is, to show the scanty, defective erroneous system of the modern formal English churchmen, both clerical and lay; to contrast their doctrines and practice with the public formularies of the Anglican Church, and the character and

conduct of her venerable reformers and martyrs; to show the paramount importance of vital religion, even in a national and political view; and to unite *all* classes of Englishmen to serious reflection on the alarming aspect of the times; then pregnant with revolution, and infidelity, and formalism, and ruin.

The good archdeacon Daubeney, alarmed at the pure evangelism of the lay senator's book, published his "Guide to the Church," as "*a corrective of the evil*;" to use bishop Marsh's words, when he advised the common prayer book to be always joined with the distribution of the Bible. Mr. Wilberforce avoids all the debatable questions between churchmen and dissenters, and holds *all* to be real Christians who agree in the essentials of the Gospel, though differing in circumstantialia. The which appeared to the archdeacon a grievous sin of omission, if not a deadly error; and he laboured, accordingly, to persuade the English people to believe, that the evils of the age are to be traced to preachers and writers *not* instructing their parishioners and readers in the nature and consequences of *schism*.

He opines it to be *as*, nay *more* important, to cleave to the discipline, than to the doctrines of the church. He is not anxious to inquire if *any other* candle has been lighted up, or if the *old* candle still continues to burn brightly, or be waning dimly in the socket; but all his care is to ascertain if the *form* of the *candlestick* be right, and of the true, *exclusive* shape and size. *All* the English dissenters, all modern separatists, as well as the ancient Brownists, anabaptists and quakers, he declares to be in a damnable error; and consigns them to the *uncovenanted* mercies of God.

Thus, at the close of the eighteenth century of the Christian era, did a beneficed clergyman in the English protestant episcopal church establishment, leap backward, at one single vault, into the darkest ages of *popery*, and shut out all nonepiscopalians from the Redeemer's kingdom. In support of this marvellous

Christian discovery, Mr. Daubeney says: "from the general tenor of Scripture, it is to be concluded, that *none* but members of *the* (English) church *can* be partakers of the spirit (of God) by which it is accompanied. Without therefore presuming to determine the condition of those, who are *out* of the (English) church; we are, *at least*, justified in saying, that *their* hope of salvation *must* be built upon some general idea of the Divine mercy; to which the member of the church has a *covenanted* claim."

This precious "Guide" led to the promulgation of the popish tenet of *exclusive* churchmanship, among the protestant episcopal divines of these United States; as will, hereafter, more fully appear.

The English dissenters were *not* at all alarmed at the report of Mr. Daubeney's papal popgun; the sound of which also, seems never to have struck upon the tympanum of Mr. Wilberforce's ear. But Sir Richard Hill, one of the sounder members of the Anglican Church, was grieved at the basis of the archdeacon's divinity, so much better suited to the meridian of Rome, than to that of any protestant communion. In his "Apology for brotherly love, and for the doctrines of the church of England," he claims for a servant of God, in a conventicle, the right to be esteemed a *brother* by the worshipper in the established church.

He shows the folly and impolicy of pushing the point of episcopacy *too far*; of laying as much stress upon the regular descent of a bishop, as the jockeys and sportsmen place upon the pedigree of a blood-horse, or a pointer-dog. He contends, that this hypothesis *unchurches* full half the foreign communions in Christendom; and, also, invalidates the orders and ministrations of numberless English established clergy, derived from prelates, and archprelates, baptized, only, by dissenters, in an *uncovenanted* sort of way; and thus destroys the *unity* of apostolic, episcopal succession; a chain, the failure of one single link in which, ruins the value of the whole theory.

He adverts to the place which the doctrines of grace *ought* to occupy in the scheme of salvation; and proves most conclusively, that mere churchmanship is *not* Christianity. He likewise convicts Mr. Daubeny of a practice, not uncommon with this champion of exclusive churchmanship, to wit, the making a *false* quotation from the pious baronet's "Five Letters to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher." This "Apology" is, on the whole, a spirited, sarcastic, witty, and eloquent performance.

To the archdeacon's *definition* of a church; namely, that it is a society, under governors appointed by Christ; sir Richard Hill opposes that of the Anglican Articles themselves; to wit, "a society of faithful men, where the word of God is preached;" and retorts the charge of *schism*, or rending the body of Christ, upon the worthy Bath preacher himself. Mr. Daubeny denies the validity of *any* sacrament, *unless* it be episcopally administered. Yet two primates of all England, not to mention some simple Anglican prelates; and four supreme, secular, sovereign pontiffs of that church establishment, were *never* baptized by a bishop, priest, or deacon. What then, according to the Sarum archdeacon's position, is to become of these *unbaptized* hierarchs, appointed by *unbaptized* heads of the church, and consecrated by bishops, whose predecessors were excommunicated at Rome, by the old lady of Babylon; from whose hands *alone* the Anglican Church derives her unbroken, apostolic, episcopal succession? Are they not *all* in an *uncovenanted* predicament?

The Christian Observer, in the commencement of its career, faithfully protested against the very lax, and *unscriptural* notions of religion, entertained and promulgated by too many of the English established clergy, and their abettors. For example, it reproveth, with just severity, the Antijacobin Review for July 1802, in which number, the reviewer, after interpreting John xvii. 20, 21, as proving that *all* persons of *all* communions, which differ, in form of church government,

from that of the English establishment, are “*without* a ground for the hope they entertain of salvation;” exclaims—“O! would *our* bishops attend to *this*, as *their* predecessors, the Apostles, did (*where?*) before them; and they would contribute much more effectually to the enlargement of the flock of Christ, than by delivering charges, recommendatory of a *spiritual* religion; a term, to which a quaker, or a methodist, may be able to affix a meaning, but which a *sound* churchman does *not* understand. It is a religion, double distilled, its substance all evaporated in fume, and may suit us when we are *out* of the body; but leads *only* to confusion, and every evil work, while we remain in it.”

The Christian Observer is exceedingly surprised at the promulgation of *such* sentiments, in a work, set up, and continued for the express purpose of supporting the established church of England. But a short visit to the United States would teach him, that these diagnostics of “*sound churchmanship*” are by no means uncommon. He asks: what language is this from the persons here using it?

Unbelievers have condemned, as absurd and hypocritical, all regard for Christianity, except as a mere external thing; an engine to overawe the multitude. Men of the world, absorbed in business, or drowned in sensuality, have practically denied all that is spiritual in religion. Dissenters have insinuated, that the religion of the English establishment consists chiefly in *forms*. Mr. Daubeny has maintained, that the spirituality of divine worship is *not* essential to the being of the church of Christ. And *now*, spiritual religion is avowedly rejected, and openly ridiculed, by professed Christians, and sworn clerical champions of the Anglican Church.

Nothing daunted by the detection of his ignorance as to all sound Scriptural divinity; nor by being convicted of frequent *false* citations; the intrepid arch-deacon, in his “Appendix to a Guide to the Church,” says, with his accustomed arrogance, to the editor of

the Christian Observer, "I mean neither to disparage nor offend you, when I take upon me to assert, that you are but a *sciolist* in theology, if you are yet to learn, that, however bold the position may seem, *that* may be a *true* church, in which the pure word of God is *not* preached."

To this demivolt of *popery* from a protestant priest, the Christian Observer mildly answers: compare this passage with the following extract from the second part of the Whit-Sunday homily; and Mr. Daubeney will appear *not* to agree so exactly with the Reformers, as he professes. "The *true* church," says the homily, "is an universal congregation, or fellowship of God's *faithful* and *elect* people, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the head corner stone. And it hath *always* three notes or marks, whereby it is known; *pure* and *sound* doctrine; the sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution; and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline. This description of the church is agreeable, both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient fathers; so that *none* may justly find fault therewith."

Had the archdeacon read this declaration of the English Reformers, when he assailed the Christian Observer, as *heretical*, for advancing the identical proposition? But Mr. Daubeney is *not* the only high churchman, who derives both his churchmanship and his theology, from sources, *other* than the articles and homilies, which they so solemnly subscribe.

In these United States, *any evangelical* clergyman, of *any* religious denomination, can gather a congregation, and erect a church, out of the surrounding world. It is done daily and hourly, over all the immense extent of the Union. Our *formalists*, indeed, of *every* persuasion, gain ground more slowly, for *want* of a national church establishment. *Such* nominal, formal professors, always need the aid of the

secular arm, as a substitute for Baxter's *shove* to a *certain* description of Christians. For they make but little headway, when the competition between formalism and religion is left open; and the civil government abstains from all undue political interference.

The evangelical *dissenters*, in England, also, gather their people, and build their churches, from out of the surrounding multitude of worldlings. To a much *less* extent, indeed, than do the evangelical denominations in these United States; because they labour under great disadvantages. They must apply to a civil magistrate for a *license*, to give them leave to worship Jehovah, to preach the pure Gospel, to awaken sinners to a sense of their lost condition by nature, and lead them to the foot of the Cross. They must also encounter the frowns and opposition of the established hierarchy; which, not contented with generally, *as a body*, neglecting the spiritual, the immortal interests of the people committed to their pastoral care; invariably calumniate and persecute *all*, who are in earnest about the everlasting safety of their fellow men.

But still *greater* difficulty attends every effort to build a *new* church, within the pale of the Anglican establishment. An expensive act of parliament, leave of the patron of the living, and of the incumbent of the parish, must be obtained, before a single foundation-stone can be laid; and when the church is erected, the person, at whose expense it is built, has *no* power over it; *no* voice nor part in the selection of its minister. It is immediately swallowed up in the fathomless abyss of *church patronage*; and helps to swell the influence, either of the civil government, or of some noble, or gentle, or bishop, or body corporate.

Mr. Wilks himself acknowledges this. After lamenting the want of church room in the English establishment, for full half the English population, he says: while dissenters of every class could collect

subscriptions, and erect meeting-houses, without any legal difficulty; and were availing themselves of the facility, with a zeal which has *multiplied* their converts in *every* part of the kingdom; the friends of the establishment, even in cases of the greatest urgency, found obstructions in *their* way often insuperable.

The settlement of the rights of property and patronage; the conciliation of the various parties, directly or indirectly concerned; with the expense, uncertainty and loss of time in procuring a special act of parliament for the purpose; presented impediments, *any one* of which was often sufficient to frustrate the whole proceeding; and *all* of which, in combination, it was seldom possible to surmount. The recent act for building additional churches in populous parishes has removed *some* of these impediments; and has afforded considerable facilities for supplying the *deficiency* of church room; at least, in the most pressing class of cases.

But this act is clogged with provisions, which materially affect its usefulness; particularly, the refusal to give voluntary contributors *any* share in the patronage, must for ever prevent its becoming a popular measure. The original patronage of the English churches was more wisely managed; the presentation to the benefice was usually in the hands of the founder; so that there was the strongest encouragement to build churches, wherever they were wanted; which encouragement is *wholly* withheld under the present act.

Dr. Chalmers is still more explicit upon this subject. In discussing the question of church patronage, he says: our reason for affirming a jealousy of the *popular* voice in the appointment of clergy, on the part of the British legislature, is founded on an examination of their recent act for building, and promoting the building, of additional churches in populous parishes. Though the parliamentary grant for this object be *so small*, that, for a great national effort, it must be extensively aided by the voluntary subscriptions of

the people, yet the will of the people is admitted to *no* authority in the *nomination* of the minister. *Their* contributions are looked for, without any such equivalent, either in whole or in part, being provided to encourage them.

When the erection is a chapel for an ecclesiastical district, the *patronage* is vested, either in the incumbent of the parish, or in some way to be agreed upon by the patrons of the parish, where it is situated, in conjunction with the commissioners for carrying the act into execution. When the erection is a new parish church, its patronage is vested in the patron of the original parish, from which it is detached. In other words, patronage is to have *as great* an ascendancy, and the popular will to be of *as little* legal force in counteracting it, with the new, as with the present churches. And so sensitive is the aversion to any limitation upon this point, that when a clause was proposed in the house of commons, for vesting the patronage of new churches or chapels, in the twelve highest subscribers, where the edifices were raised entirely by subscription; this clause, though supported by the *whole* evangelical interest in parliament, and advocated by the chiefs of administration, called forth a prompt and overbearing majority, who instantly put it down.

So completely is the Anglican Church establishment considered as a mere *state machine*, to swell secular influence, by the great body of the British legislature!

Now, says Dr. Chalmers, this is, certainly, *not* the way to promote the building of new churches; *nor* to secure an attendance upon them when built. And the *only* hopeful circumstance in the whole of this national provision, is, that the stipend of the minister is paid out of the *pew rents*, raised from the hearers; the common mode of raising the salary of our American clergy, in most of the denominations. This will *compel* an accommodation to the popular taste, at least, in the *first* instance.

But *utterly* helpless is every speculation of the legislature, about the revival and growth of public virtue in England, when thus *impeded* by their own groundless alarms: and by their utter misconception, of *what* that instrument is, by which people are drawn to attend on the lessons of Christianity; and of *what* that Christianity is, which emanated pure from the mouth of revelation, and which, by its adaptation to human want, and human consciousness, is *sure* to meet with a responding movement from the multitude, whenever it is addressed to them.

One evil has ensued upon this movement of the legislature. It has tended to fill and satisfy the public imagination; and thus arrested the zeal of private adventurers, friendly alike to the establishment and to Christian education. Previous to the passing of this act, Mr. Gladstone, of Liverpool, erected two new churches in that town, negotiating for himself, *not* the permanent patronage, for this could not be obtained, but the three first nominations of a minister to each of them.

There was, in this instance, every security for a popular exercise of the patronage. The zeal which prompted the undertaking, was a guarantee for the appointment of acceptable and effective clergymen. And, as the seat rents were to form the revenue, both for the minister's stipend, and the repair of the fabrics, the power of a veto was conceded to the popular voice.

Had Mr. Gladstone obtained the *perpetual* patronage of his two churches, in return for having erected and endowed them, the right would have descended, by inheritance, to his family, and like *any other* property, been transferable by sale. We know not how far the actual patronage in England, has taken origin, and its descent, from the liberality of founders; or been rendered to great proprietors, as an equivalent for the church expenses laid upon them. But when we think for what essential purposes this right may be acquired, and how fairly it may be appropriated, and

handed down in families, from one generation to another, we look to its *guidance*, and *not* to its overthrow, for any great Christian *reformation* of the (*established*) churches in England.

The holders of this important right will, *at length*, (*sed quando, domine?*) participate in the growing spirit, and illumination of the age; and while others regard *patronage* as the great instrument of the corruption and decline of Christianity; we trust, that under the impulse of *better* principles, it will, *at length*, (how long?) become the instrument of its revival.

We envy not that dissenter his feelings, who would not bless God, and rejoice in the progress of an *apostolic* bishop through his diocese. But it is *not* from this quarter, *at present*, that the glance of disapprobation and disdain falls upon him. It is from his own brethren on the episcopal bench; who, *if*, instead of lifting upon him the frown of a hostile countenance, were to go and *do* likewise, they would throne their establishment in the affections of the whole population; and by the resistless moral force, which lies in the union of humble worth and exalted condition, would cause *both* the radicalism and infidelity of England, to hide their faces as ashamed.

Wherever the good bishop of Gloucester, (Dr. Ryder,) assumes, for a day, the office of humble pastor, in one of the humblest of his parishes, he leaves an unction of blessedness behind him; and the amount of precious fruit, that springs from such an itinerancy of love, and evangelical labour, is beyond all computation. Such a mingling with the people would *not* confound, but firmly harmonize, ranks. It would sanctify and strengthen *all* the bonds of society.

It is wretched to think, not merely, of sound principle being thrown aside, but of sound *policy* being so glaringly traversed, by the derision and discouragement laid on all the activities of religious zeal; or, that *they*, who preside over the destinies, as well as the patronage of the English church, should have been

misled into the imagination, that her security lies in her *stillness*; and that, should the warmth of restless sectarianism be, in any semblance or measure, imported into her bosom, it will burn up and destroy her.

Does Dr. Chalmers exhibit *these* facts and observations, to show forth the *beneficial* tendencies and influences of the existing system of patronage, in the Anglican Church establishment? It was the patronage of the British government, which manufactured those very formal bishops, who scowl with the darkest frowns, upon the apostolic labours of their evangelical brother of Gloucester; those very formal bishops, who, if report speaks truth, laboured by unanimous petition, both archiepiscopal and prelatial, to prevent Dr. Ryder from ascending to his present elevation; their righteous petition *only* failing in its object by the force of family, and fraternal effort.

We believe the *best* system of church patronage to be, the election of the clergyman by the *people*, who pay him his stipend, and to whom he administers in spiritual things. In these United States, and among the evangelical dissenters in Britain, where the people actually call and elect their own ministers, a *much greater* proportion of vital religion, and active practical piety, are found, than in the churches of the Anglican, the Hibernian, and the Scottish establishments; in which, the civil government, the lay nobility and gentry, the bishops, and the corporate bodies, both secular and clerical, dispose of all the ecclesiastical dignities and benefices.

It is also worthy of remembrance, that the mere possession of large funds and revenues *cannot* render a church flourishing and prosperous. If it could, the established church of England, with an annual income greater than the whole permanent capital of all the American churches put together, would infallibly crush the efforts of all other sects; instead of continually clamouring about *her own* danger of perishing, from the rapid and increasing growth of so many various denominations of dissenters.

By far the wealthiest of all the religious bodies in these United States, is the protestant episcopal communion, in the city of New-York; supposed to possess real estate to the amount of six millions of dollars in value; though not yielding an income corresponding with so large a capital. Yet the American-Anglo-Church halts *very far* behind many other denominations, in numbers, and activity, and influence.

The real, the *only* secret of a church's prosperity, is to be found in her clergy preaching the Gospel, and performing the duties of their pastoral office conscientiously and well.

Scarcely any of the greatest and most powerful Christian corporations in the Union, to wit, the presbyterians, the congregationalists, the baptists, and the methodists, possess large permanent funds; yet they increase and multiply on all sides; and their wants are supplied by the contributions of a willing people, attached to their faithful ministers, who preach evangelically. A pious clergy generally makes a pious laity; and men *really* religious, are always ready to give of their temporal substance to promote the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom; to give a *part* of that gold and silver, *all* of which belongs to God, as sole proprietor of the universe; for the purpose of erecting temples to his worship and honour.

An able evangelical preacher will do incalculably more for the best interests of religion, out of the voluntary contributions of an attached people, than a formal drone can do, out of the permanent funds of a largely endowed church, *in conjunction* with the contributions of that congregation, to which he deals out his weekly dole of Sabbatical snow-broth.

The *best* ecclesiastical treasury is a Gospel ministry; which will always be able, both to build churches and to fill them with hearers; whereas a formal clergy, even when churches are already built for them, can

seldom, if ever, gather together either people or money, sufficient to forward any ecclesiastical scheme, that might be considered necessary. This *twofold* fact is verified by the daily and hourly experience of all our cities, throughout the whole of the Atlantic seaboard.

Nevertheless, Mr. Wilks earnestly recommends the American legislature, forthwith to make provision for the establishment of a national church. But, in the first place, the federal constitution prohibits the general government from having recourse to such a measure. And, secondly, if that obstacle were removed, the representatives of the people, in Congress assembled, would hardly venture to impose the burden of a state church upon their fellow-citizens; seeing, that such a proceeding would be in direct hostility to the whole scope and genius of all the social institutions in these United States.

Without entering into any detail of facts, as to *how* the objects of these social institutions are practically pursued in particular instances; without descending to any investigation of the machinery and movements of various political parties, from which I have always stood aloof, as cordially as I would from the yellow fever, or the plague; it is sufficient for our present purpose to notice, that the *two* main, avowed objects of American policy are: first, to carry on the government with as little expense, pressure and interference with the pursuits and comforts of the people, as is compatible with executive efficiency; and, secondly, to give as much possible personal liberty to individuals, as is consistent with social safety.

If this great experiment in favour of human happiness and improvement, shall, in future, and permanently, be as successful as it has hitherto proved, it will be of immense moment, not only to this country, but to the other nations of the earth; by eventually inducing them also, to lean with a less heavy hand, in the shape of government expenditure, and government restraint, upon their respective people.

BRITISH PRESSURE.

America would, undoubtedly, pause, before she burdened herself with an annual tax of *fifty* millions of dollars, to support a state church; when she does *not* now expend one *half* of that sum yearly, in carrying on the whole of her general government, civil, naval, military, and including the appropriation of eight millions for the sinking fund; which had, on the first of January, 1822, worn down the *whole* public debt of the nation to *ninety-three* millions of dollars, and a fraction; making a little more than *twenty* millions sterling, or, about *half* the amount of the annual *interest* on the public debt of Britain.

Now, in England, every *third* sovereign of the whole national income goes into the exchequer; or, in other words, every *third* person in the British isles, works *altogether* for the government, and is himself entirely supported by the other two. If, in these United States, every third dollar of the whole annual income of the country went into the public treasury at Washington, the American people would be apt to ask, *what* equivalent they received for giving up *one-third* of all their property, time, talent and labour, to be consumed by government. And, beyond all question, they would *not* find the equivalent in an expensive national church, made up out of one dominant sect, whose chief ecclesiastical functionaries were appointed by the existing secular administration; and whose dignitaries, generally, and systematically, proscribed all evangelical religion, and persecuted all personal piety; more especially, if found within the pale of their own established communion.

Will the British government, with an unpaid public debt of four thousand millions of dollars; a weight of taxation, deducting one-third of the whole yearly income of the nation; a prostrate agriculture, an embarrassed commerce and struggling manufactures; a system of *game* laws, which erects every landed gentleman into a petty tyrant on his own domain; and creates a regular army of keepers and poaching banditti, who fill the

whole country with depredation, violence and blood; a scheme of *poor* laws, that ensures and perpetuates a degraded, demoralized, discontented population; *persist* in being the great political arsenal for forging *formal* prelates? *persist* in bestowing bishoprics and benefices on worldly, irreligious clerks? *persist* in secularizing that national church, of which they are the appointed legal patrons, protectors and guardians? and *thus* inflict a *deadlier* evil upon the British empire, than all the combined ills of debt, taxation, game laws, poor laws, a penal code, at once sanguinary and ineffectual, and languishing manufactures, commerce and agriculture; by alienating the hearts of the people from their rulers, and by diffusing the horrors of infidelity and profligacy throughout all the ranks and orders of the community?

And this, too, at a time when the chiefs of the British cabinet avow *openly* in the house of commons, that it is *necessary* to keep up *useless, sinecure* places, in order to balance the influence of the crown against the growing weight of popular opinion; and to carry on, with sufficient facility and force, the machinery of government. This audacious declaration was made in March, 1822, during the discussion of a motion for the reduction of one of two postmasters general, each of whom receives a salary of 2,500*l.*, upwards of eleven thousand dollars, a year; though it was not denied, that one of these offices is altogether a sinecure.

The main ground upon which the administration contended that this salaried sinecure *ought* to be retained, was, that in these days of increased light, when *public opinion* has gained a force unknown to former times, *such* appointments are absolutely necessary to maintain the due preponderance of the crown.

Now, if this argument be sound, the British government ought *not* to have made *any* reductions; but to have kept up the expenditure to the war-pitch

of 1815; about five hundred millions of dollars, or *half*, instead of a *third*, of the whole national income. For, certainly, the influence of the crown would be greater, if it took a hundred and ten millions sterling a year, out of the pockets of the people, than if it took only seventy millions annually.

We believe that this is the *first* time that a British ministry has dared to use such *unconstitutional* language, as, that useless and expensive offices are to be retained for the *sole* purpose of upholding the influence of the crown in parliament. And we are quite certain, that such an unconstitutional declaration could not have been made at a more unpropitious period, than when the people of England were staggering under the burden of an universal and oppressive taxation; and the whole agricultural interest, in particular, was smarting from the pressure of unprecedented distress. It showed no peculiar respect for the public opinion of Britain, to send forth such an insulting avowal.

But the influence of the crown, that is to say, of the existing administration of England, cannot fail of being enormous; from the collection and distribution of a yearly revenue, amounting to three hundred millions of dollars; the keeping up a numerous army and navy; the innumerable civil and judicial appointments in the British Isles, and their immense colonial dominions, including the extensive empire in India; and from the patronage of the united church of England and Ireland, as by law established.

Surely, a wise and equitable administration of such immense means, power, and patronage, might give to the British executive sufficient influence, without having recourse to the mean and miserable expedient of retaining expensive, avowedly useless offices, in order to secure a certain number of obedient votes in the two houses of the imperial parliament. And most undoubtedly, the influence of the British crown would be incalculably augmented, if it would direct its church patronage into the channel of evangelism.

An *evangelical* hierarchy, and an *evangelical* parish clergy, spread throughout England and Ireland, would prove a wall of fire, a perpetual, *sure* defence to the monarchy and people of Britain, against all the vain assaults of infidelity, and radicalism, and anarchy.

It is gratifying to know, that this unconstitutional avowal did *not* finally succeed. For, although, in March, the motion to reduce one of the postmasters general was put down by a ministerial majority; yet, in the month of May following, lord Normanby moved, that the house of commons would address the king, praying him to direct, that the office of one of the postmasters general be abolished. And, after a long and obstinate debate, notwithstanding the pathetic lamentations of the chancellor of the exchequer, that this motion was an attempt to procure indirectly, what the administration had directly negatived only a few weeks before, it was carried by a majority of fifteen. This decision was received by loud cheers throughout St. Stephen's chapel.

The next day, the marquis of Londonderry appeared at the bar, and delivered the following reply from the king to the address voted last night by the house respecting the office of joint postmaster general: "the king, having been attended with the address of the house of commons yesterday, acquaints the house, that he will give directions that the *salary* of one of the postmasters general shall forthwith be discontinued. His majesty only postpones the abolition of the *office* of one of the postmasters, until arrangements shall be made for the due execution of the office, under the reduction."

This is a pleasing proof, that public opinion exerts a wholesome influence in England. Would that it were possible for public opinion to compel the British government, so to exercise its church patronage, as to purify the establishment from the foul leprosy of formalism; and to pour into her aged veins the reno-

vating lifeblood of evangelical piety; that she may illumine all the Christian hemisphere with pure and apostolic light.

But the experiment of an established church *has* been tried in America; and with the usual success of promoting discord and diminishing religion.

In the year 1693, colonel Fletcher, governor of the then province of New-York, planned an establishment in favour of the episcopal church. At that time, the episcopalians in the colony were *very few*; residing chiefly in the city of New-York, and the neighbouring counties. They consisted, almost entirely, of the officers of government and their dependents, and some of the military; that is, in other words, *official* test act churchmen.

The Dutch church, at that period, was the predominant sect, as to numbers, wealth and respectability. Governor Fletcher found the house of assembly decidedly hostile to his scheme, on its first proposal. But as every public body has always its full complement of weak members, by duping some, and bullying others, he at length wrung a reluctant assent, by a lean majority; and on the 21st of September, 1693, an act was passed, *establishing* the episcopal church in the city and county of New-York, and in the counties of Westchester, Queens, and Richmond.

The act was drawn, and the whole device managed with the due proportion of pious fraud. The inhabitants of the counties mentioned were directed to choose annually ten vestrymen and two churchwardens, who were empowered to elect the clergy for each district; and, to support these clergy, a certain sum was assessed on the inhabitants generally, of *all* denominations, in each county. The act did not explicitly enjoin the choice of episcopal ministers; and by an explanatory act, passed some years afterwards, it was declared, that *dissenters* might be chosen. But by lodging the choice in the

hands of the vestrymen and churchwardens, the election of episcopal clergy was ensured; and *such*, in fact, always were appointed.

Thus, from the year 1693 to 1776, a period of eighty-three years, the Dutch and English presbyterians, and all other nonepiscopalians, in the counties of New-York, Westchester, Queens, and Richmond, besides supporting their own churches, were *compelled* to contribute to the support of the established episcopal church.

This church establishment, as a matter of course, drew from the other denominations, many converts whose unchanged and formal hearts preferred the temporal advantages of belonging to the state sect, to remaining with the proscribed denominations, however sound in evangelical doctrine; however pure in practical piety. The consequence was a continual clashing of hostile sects, and a grievous declension of real religion. This establishment was broken up by the revolution; since which there has been an increasing harmony among the various Christian denominations; and a considerably increased diffusion of vital piety, throughout the community at large.

In Virginia, a church establishment was tried on a much larger scale, for it pervaded the whole province. And its result affords the same historical proof in this country, which has been so long afforded in England; of the efficacy of *formalism* in destroying, and of *evangelism* in building up religious bodies.

Prior to the revolution, the protestant episcopal church was established in Virginia, under the most favourable external circumstances. An ample provision was made for the maintenance of the clergy, who were, generally, regularly bred clerks, sent over from the state church in England; and Virginia was deemed to be an integral part of the diocese of the bishop of London. These established clergy, however, by persevering in a resolute system of formal-

ism, accompanied with a corresponding secular life, soon demolished episcopacy in that important section of the Union.

Of late years, after a long night of entire prostration, the protestant episcopal church has risen from its ashes, in that state, under the auspices of its evangelical bishop; and an evangelical clergy, treading in the footsteps of their venerable diocesan. And, at this moment, there is no other portion of the United States, where the American-Anglo-Church flourishes so much, and increases so rapidly.

And to say truth, in all the other dioceses, wherever the clergy preach the evangelical doctrines of their own articles and homilies, their churches are filled, and numbers continually added to their communion. While the formalists, like their brethren in England, either empty the churches which they find full, or never fill those which they find empty; and then shake their sagacious heads in utter surprise, at the rapid growth of other denominations, whose ministers propound the doctrines of the Cross, faithfully, fervently, zealously.

Hence, we conclude, that the recipe of a church establishment, prescribed by the English doctors, is *not* an infallible remedy for that *low* state of American religion, which they so confidently announce and so pathetically deplore.

The truth is, a national church establishment, invariably, adds to the *natural* formalism of man, the necessary secularity of a secular government, and a secular patronage; whence, it is scarcely, if at all, possible, under such a system, to keep alive a general spirit of piety, throughout the great body of the national communion. How far the alliance between church and state, the pluralities, the gross inequality in the revenues of the different bishoprics and benefices, the translations from see to see, the sinecures, in the shape of deanries, canonries, prebends, and other *noneffective* appointments, in conjunction with the *mode* of ecclesiastical provision, is calculated

to subserve the cause of *real* Christianity, may be seen from the *actual* state of religion in the English and Irish establishments, *now*, after all the advantages derived to them from the frequent *revivals* of evangelical piety, which have taken place in those two countries, during the last eighty years; which revivals, it cannot be too often repeated, the Anglican and Hibernian state churches have unceasingly laboured, and do now endeavour, to depress, and to destroy.

What the condition of religion, in the English church establishment, was, prior to the year 1740, may be gathered from the Decades of Mr. Middleton, who says: that spirit is justly chargeable with bitterness, which can roundly condemn the innovating zeal of the earlier methodists; when reference is made to the *formal, inefficient, infidel* profession of the day, and an involuntary admiration is excited at the expeditions of such men as the two Wesleys, Delamotte, Ingham, and Whitfield; prompted by regard to the souls of their fellow-men.

Nor was the miserable wit of the "Spiritual Quixote," and the "Minor," competent to invalidate the decree passed upon their hallowed undertaking in the cooler moments of reflection. Their zeal, in the first instance, was excellent. And credit, in particular, is due to the repeated declarations of *attachment* to the national church, made by the two rival Reformers; the sin of whose evangelism, however, was never forgiven by the dignitaries of the establishment; and, at length, *forced* them to a reluctant separation.

The stir they created was good; they quickened an *inert* mass of established religion; they carried light, and heat, and life, into regions of darkness, and cold, and death. By compelling their formal opponents to examine the long neglected doctrines of the Anglican Church, they raised the tone of theological instruction. Some of the state clergy themselves were awakened to a sense of the importance

of their ministerial office, by the exhortation and examples of those very men, whom they were taught by their ecclesiastical superiors to execrate as dangerous fanatics, and seditious schismatics, and horrible heretics. While others were led, from the mere proximity of a popular minister, to emulate his doctrine, to imitate his diligence, and to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified. Thus, gradually, did the flame of evangelism spread its holy illumination over the dark recesses of a formal church establishment.

And *very* gradually, and slowly, did this flame spread; for about thirty years after the first rise of Wesley and Whitfield, and their fellow-labourers in the Gospel vineyard, namely, on the 11th day of March, 1768, a solemn convocation was held in Oxford, by the vice-chancellor and some heads of houses; when, after a hearing of several hours, sentence of *expulsion* was formally pronounced against six of the junior members of St. Edmund Hall, "for holding *methodistical* tenets, and taking upon them to *pray, read, and expound* the Scriptures, and singing hymns in a private house."

It appeared, on the investigation, that the young gentlemen so severely punished, were highly distinguished for their *religious* and *moral* conduct; so that the whole amount of the crime charged, was a *constructive* breach of some academic, or ecclesiastical canons. Dr. Dixon, late of Queen's, and principal of Edmund Hall, pleaded in their defence; showed how pious and exemplary was their conduct; and that their tenets were in strict conformity with the thirty-nine articles. Another respectable head of a college observed, that their fault arose from excess of devotion; and if these six gentlemen are to be expelled for having *too much* religion, it will be proper to enquire into the conduct of some, who have *too little*.

This was a just reflection on the scandalously relaxed discipline, in the university of Oxford, in regard to

the *personal* morality of its students. About the same time that these six young men were visited with the wrath of this great nursing mother of the English church establishment, for the sin of praying, and reading, and expounding the Bible, and singing hymns, a Mr. Welling had been charged on oath, with reviling the Scriptures, and ridiculing the miracles, *on the eve* of his ordination as an Anglican deacon, and was *excused* by these sanctimonious dignitaries of the established church, on the plea of *intoxication*; thereby showing, that blasphemy and drunkenness are *better* qualifications for admission into a state church, than sound piety and pure morals.

All defence of these young evangelicals was overruled, and the vice-chancellor told their chief accuser, that the university was much obliged to him for his good work. The sentence was pronounced in the chapel, on James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Joseph Shipman, Benjamin Kay, Erasmus Middleton, and Thomas Grove; for the *crimes* above mentioned, we David Durell, D. D. vice-chancellor of the university, and visitor of the hall; Thomas Randolph, D. D. president of C. C. C.; Thomas Fothergill, D. D. provost of Queen's college; Thomas Nowell, D. D. principal of St. Mary's hall; and the Rev. Thomas Atterbury, A. M. of Christ church, senior proctor, deem each of them worthy of being expelled the hall; I therefore, by my visitatorial power, do hereby pronounce them expelled."

Of course, the friends of religion were shocked at such conduct in the chief nursery of the national church establishment. Mr. Hill, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Townsend, and some other gentlemen, addressed letters on the subject to Drs. Durell and Nowell. The apology offered by the friends of expulsion was, that the young men had broken the statutes of the university. But this plea came with rather a bad grace from those reverend divines, who most scrupulously abstained from expelling any of their students, for swearing,

or gambling, or drunkenness, or fornication; which should seem *not* to be less irregular, though so much *more common*, than extemporary praying, singing hymns, and expounding the Scriptures, among the Oxford gownsmen.

This flagitious act exposed the university to the grave rebuke of bishop Horne, and to the airy ridicule of the Rev. John Macgowan's "Shaver." It was evident, from Dr. Nowell's learned and elaborate answer to sir Richard Hill, that it is less criminal, less impious, and much safer, for an Oxford student to revile the character, and ridicule the miracles of Christ and Moses, than to pray in private houses, without a printed book. The eloquent and erudite orator of the university, gives a full account of the case of Mr. Welling, *his own* particular friend, who was charged, upon oath, with reviling and ridiculing the Scriptures.

The proof was so direct against the Rev. Mr. Welling, that he did *not* attempt to deny the charge. Was *he* expelled? No. Why not? Because he pleaded that he was *drunk*, when he uttered the blasphemy and the ribaldry charged against him. The *candidate* for holy orders in the established church of England was *drunk*, when he ridiculed revealed religion, and blasphemed the name of its Almighty founder; and yet *he* was admitted into orders, and *continued* a member of the Oxford university, while six students were *expelled* for praying and singing hymns, and expounding the Bible; by the *same* reverend dignitaries of the Anglican Church, who tried Welling for blasphemy and bawdry, and *acquitted* him because he was drunk; pardoned him one crime, for committing another.

It is *thus*, that a national church establishment promotes piety, and prevents heathenism, in a country?

It appears, also, from Dr. Durell's defence of Mr. Welling, that private religious meetings are in much worse odour at Oxford, than taphouses and taverns;

for the six young gentlemen were expelled for praying in a private house; while Mr. Welling's getting drunk in a taphouse was deemed a valid excuse for his having blasphemed and ridiculed the Christian religion, a sufficient reason why he should be admitted to holy orders, and continue a member of the university. I do not know if the British government afterwards made Mr. Welling into a bishop.

Mr. Middleton, although he objects to the style of sir Richard Hill, and to the light manner in which Macgowan treats so serious a subject, yet acknowledges that the sentence of expulsion, passed against the six students of Edmund hall, was neither proportionate, nor humane, nor wise. Not proportionate, because it applied the extreme of punishment, to an offence confessedly of no flagrant order, involving no moral turpitude, but consisting of practices, which, *if* violating any academic rules, would, most probably, have been discontinued, through kind remonstrance, or positive injunction.

Not humane, because it summarily deprived them of the support and respectability anticipated from their ministerial office. Not wise, because it was directly calculated to oppose an effectual barrier to episcopal ordination; and thus reduce the sufferers to the alternative of renouncing a profession, on which they had fixed their fondest hope, or seeking to exercise it among the dissenters.

The resistless inference from these facts is, that the expulsion of these six students was intended as a *check* to those serious and evangelical views of religion, which were gradually gaining ground in England, and beginning to disturb even the death-sleep of formalism, in which the established church had so long reposed; that evangelism, which was *more* offensive to those reverend judges and dignitaries of the Anglican establishment, than blasphemy, and ribaldry, and drunkenness, combined. Their hatred and horror of pure, Scriptural religion, induced them to stain the archives of a protestant university,

in the eighteenth century, with the indelible disgrace of this flagitious sentence.

But *thus* must it ever be, while an intimate political alliance with the state continues to *secularize* the church. Men immersed in the schemes and intrigues of secular policy, cannot easily look upon the clerical order in any other light, than as so much machinery, to be moved by the civil government for state purposes. Hence, when sir Robert Walpole wanted *all* the votes of the episcopal bench, to carry a particular measure in the house of lords, he desired the archbishop of Canterbury to be indisposed, and keep his chamber for a few days.

Accordingly, his grace became indisposed; and the premier caused it to be whispered, that the indisposition of the present incumbent, would probably soon make a vacancy at the Lambeth palace. The *whole* bench of bishops, in person and by proxy, voted for the proposed measure; and the archbishop immediately recovered from his ministerial illness.

There can be no remedy for this crying evil, so long as the British government continues to appropriate to itself the *papal usurpation* of manufacturing bishops. Mr. Sharp, in a long note, towards the close of his "Law of Retribution," gives a detailed account of the apostolical and primitive catholic church of Christ, which always maintained the natural and just right of the clergy and people of every diocese, to elect their own bishops, for above five hundred years after the establishment of it; until the *church of Rome* began its baneful exertions to invade and suppress that just and important right.

It is evident, in how *secular* a light the British government views the English church, by its habitual prostitution of the most solemn Christian ordinance to purposes merely political. A *sacramental* test is required as an indispensable qualification for all offices, civil, military and naval. The lord high chancellor of England, the commander-in-chief of the British army, and the highest admiral in the navy

in common with the lowest exciseman, foot soldier, and marine ; must receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, administered according to the mode of the church of England ; before they can enter upon their respective services and duties.

Now, this perpetual profanation of the last, dying injunction of the Redeemer, is as *foolish* as it is wicked ; because its only effect is to exclude from the service of the British government, *honest* men, who are too conscientious to take the test, for the sake of their own emolument. For it opens wide the door of entrance to every deist, and atheist, and hypocrite, and profligate, who will swallow the sacrament, or *any thing else*, for the purpose of forwarding his own schemes of personal interest and aggrandizement.

Nevertheless, while I willingly bear testimony to the zeal, and ability, and faithfulness, with which so many clergy of *all* denominations, in these United States, discharge the duties of their sacred calling ; it must be acknowledged, as a fact, forced upon the daily and hourly experience of every observing person, that the American population, does fearfully *outrun* the means of religious instruction. It is surmised, that *one-third* of the entire population, black and white, live and die without participating in any of the ordinances of Christianity. And this awful consideration alone, ought to be a sufficient incitement to the American-Anglo-Church to exert all her efforts to send forth an *evangelical* clergy, into the waste and desert places of their destitute fellow-countrymen.

In the year 1816, the Rev. Dr. Mason called the attention of the public to the religious *wants* of the Union : an alarming evil, the existence of which, however, he does *not* attribute to there being *no* national church establishment in this country. He imputes the blame arising out of this condition of things, in a great measure, to the *sectarian* spirit which pervades and pollutes too many of our religious communions. But a church establishment is always, emphatically and exclusively, *sectarian* ; and therefore peculiarly calculated to pro-

mote and perpetuate the irreligion and *heathenism* of a people.

The established church of England has always, systematically, opposed and discouraged those very religious efforts, which Dr. Mason so justly considers as forming the true glory of Britain; for example, Bible societies, Missionary institutions, both foreign and domestic, and revivals of religion. All of which, we regret to say, are *too little* regarded by the American-Anglo-Church; while they are hailed, and cherished, and forwarded, by the other denominations, presbyterian, congregational, methodist, baptist; *all* of which prosper and increase, in proportion as they promote the cause of pure evangelism.

The only possible way of doing justice to Dr. Mason's sentiments upon this important subject, is to give them in his own earnest, eloquent, irresistible language; as expressed towards the close of his unanswerable Plea for catholic or *Christian* communion.

The spirit of *sect* hinders the churches which it governs from *co-operating* together to promote the kingdom of God. In the United States, where, generally speaking, there is *no* legal provision for the maintenance of religion, and especially among the new settlements, there is frequently, in very small districts, a confluence of people from various denominations. Their junction makes a flourishing town, and *would* make a flourishing church. They agree in primary, and disagree in secondary principles; but they will not, for the sake of the former, lay aside their contests about the latter. Collectively, they are able to support the Gospel in comfort and dignity; separately, they cannot support it at all.

They will *not* compromise their smaller differences. Every one must have his own way; must be completely gratified in his predilections. The rest must come to *him*; he will neither go to *them*, nor meet them upon common ground. And the result is, that they all experience alike, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of

water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. Sanctuary they have none. They lose, by degrees, their anxiety for the institutions of Christ. Their feeble substitutes, their small social meetings, without the ministers of grace, soon die away. Their Sabbaths are pagan; their children grow up in ignorance, in unbelief, and in vice. Their land, which smiles around them, like the garden of God, presents an unbroken scene of spiritual desolation.

In the course of one or two generations, the knowledge of God is almost obliterated; the name of Jesus is a foreign sound; his salvation an occult science; and while plenty crowns their board, and health invigorates their bodies, the bread of life blesses not their table, and moral pestilence is sweeping their souls into death. All this from the idolatry of *our* church. They might have had Christ at the expense of *sect*. They preferred sect, and are without Christ. How far the mischief shall proceed, God only can tell. It is enough to fill our hearts with grief, and shake them with terror, that, from the combination of this with other causes, we have already a population of *some millions* of our own colour, flesh and blood, nearly as destitute of evangelical mercies, as the savage, who yells on the banks of the Missouri.

See on this subject an interesting tract by the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, "On the importance of assisting young men of parts and talents, in obtaining an education for the Gospel ministry." The ingenious and inquisitive author has calculated, from various data, that out of the *eight* millions of souls, which compose the population of the United States, *five* millions are *either* utterly without the stated ordinances of the Gospel; *or*, are consigned to the most illiterate ministrations.

Supposing his calculations to exceed the fact, as it is difficult to be accurate on so great a scale; yet with every reduction, which fastidiousness itself can require, the result is sufficient to alarm, to appal, and almost to overwhelm a Christian, who compares the ratio of our

increasing population, with the probable supply of the means of grace. Several causes have, no doubt, concurred in producing our deplorable state; but that *sectarian* jealousies have not withheld their *full* amount of influence, seems not to admit of a question. The churches have been in a profound sleep, as to this momentous concern. The good God awaken them with his own voice; for every other is wasted on the wind.

When *sectarian* jealousy and pride lead professing Christians thus to sacrifice themselves and their children, it would be vain to look for their concurrence in generous efforts for the good of others. How much *yet* remains to be done, before the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea; how much before it fill the corners of every Christian country; it would be superfluous to show. Darkness covers the earth; and thick darkness the people. Millions after millions go down to the grave unacquainted with the grace which bringeth salvation; uncheered by the hope which conquers death.

If the world receive the knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent; they *must* owe the blessing to those who already enjoy the words of eternal life. If the banner of the cross ever wave triumphantly over the last battlements of idolatry, it *must* be planted by hands which have been washed in the blood of the cross. If the doctrines of kindness and peace shall humanize the habitations of cruelty, and subdue the sons of blood, they *must* flow from the lips of those, who have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

Here is a field large enough for their labours; an object worthy of their zeal. Here are conquests to be achieved, infinitely more splendid than any which signalize the heroes of the sword; and a recompense of reward, as far above their brightest honours, as the crown of glory, which fadeth not away, is better than the breath of a man that shall die, and

the son of man that shall become as grass. The enterprise is stupendous; the thought is awful. Yet awful and stupendous as they are, the thought is to be embodied in fact; the enterprise to be a matter of history. So saith the word of our God.

And that Christians, were they *heartly* in the cause, half as hearty as they are in getting the mammon of unrighteousness, are able to accomplish that word, does not permit a doubt. But for its accomplishment, there must be a *union* of counsels, of confidence, and of strength, unknown in the church since the days of apostolic harmony. To such a union nothing can be more hostile than the spirit of *sect*. We *do* hail indeed with an exultation, not unworthy, we hope, of bosoms touched by celestial fire, the auspicious dawnings of such a day of love.

The truly gracious efforts, in which the land of our fathers, the island of Great Britain, has taken the lead; and keeps, and seems destined to keep, the pre-eminence, encourage us to anticipate things, which many prophets and wise men have desired to see, and have not seen them. Eternal blessings on those children of the truth, who have excited, what may one day prove, a general movement of the church upon earth, in order to speak peace to the heathen! Upon those benefactors of the nations, who have poured their offerings into the treasury of God, and have joined their hands with their opulence, in the glorious work of sending the Bible, which teaches sinners what they must do to be saved, to all peoples, and kindreds, and nations, and tongues. Upon those vigilant sons and daughters of charity, who have gone out into the highways and hedges of the country; into the streets and lanes of the city, to seek, like their adorable Redeemer, and to save that which was lost; to bring the Sabbath, with its mercies, into the cabins of the poor, and the houses of the profane; and to train up, by labour worthy of the Lord's day, for glory, honour, and immortality, those wretched outcasts, who

were candidates for infamy in this world, and for perdition in the next.

Whose heart does not swell with transport? whose lips do not pour forth benedictions? who that names the name of Christ, can refuse *his* God speed? But *what* do these things involve? and *how* have they been accomplished? See it, O disciple of Jesus, and rejoice! They involve, they have been accomplished by the *prevalence* of the *Christian* over the *sectarian*. No such thing was attempted by modern believers; no such honours encircled their brow, till the Sun of righteousness arising upon them with healing in his wings, melted their ices, warmed their soil, and made their sectarian wilderness to blossom as the rose.

Stronger proof of the baneful and blasting influence of *sect* on the kingdom of God, no man can ask, than the fact, now notorious to the whole world, that what has been thus effected for the one, has been done at the expense of the other. If he wishes for confirmation, let him cast his eyes around. Let him see, in the caution, the management, the address, which Christians of a catholic spirit are obliged to employ; in the *slanders* (particularly those of the English state clergy generally, levelled against the Bible and church missionary societies,) which, though refuted on the spot, and put to deeper and deeper shame by every moment of experience, *still* rear their front, and maintain their hardihood; in the coldness, shyness, distance of some Christian churches, who came not *yet* to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Let him see in these things how strong a rampart *sectarianism* throws up around the camp of the devil! Let him shiver with horror, when he hears, not from lying fame, but from unvarnishing verity, that *whole* denominations are to be found; denominations, sound in the faith of Jesus, who are utterly unable to impart the Gospel to perishing pagans and paganized Christians; and who, nevertheless, will *not* lift a fin-

ger, will *not* contribute a farthing toward enlightening their darkness; because, forsooth, the candle cannot be carried in *their* candlestick! What shall we, what *can* we say to such reluctance? does it admit of more than one interpretation? namely, that they had *rather* these their poor fellow-sinners should sink down to hell, under the brand of the curse, than rise up to heaven, with the image and superscription of the Son of God, unless *their own* name be entwined with *his*, in the coronet of life?

Since Dr. Mason penned this forcible appeal to the religious world, nearly all the evangelical denominations, in these United States, have acted together more in harmony and concert, for the purpose of diffusing the blessings of the Gospel to their perishing fellow-men, both at home and abroad. That religious body of which he has himself, for many years, been a most distinguished member, has lately *united* with the general presbyterians; and they are both, now, moving forward, as *one* great, concentrated, evangelical communion, to scatter the rays of Scriptural light, not only over this immense continent, but throughout the remotest recesses of the habitable world.

No honest man will talk of the *low* and *languishing* state of religion in *this*, as compared with *any other* country; if he has an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the efforts of "the American Bible Society," supported almost entirely by nonepiscopalians; the American Anglo-Church, generally, standing aloof from this labour of love, because the pure word of God, without note, and without comment, *cannot* be carried in *her* little candlestick; the efforts of the Sunday school associations, to rescue the rising hope of the Union from the perdition of ignorance and crime; the efforts of "the United Foreign Missionary Society," composed of the presbyterian churches; of "the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions," sustained chiefly by the congregationalists of New-England;

of the baptist and the methodist missionary societies; of the societies for promoting the Gospel among seamen; to spread the germ of everlasting life over the universal earth.

To which add the vast and continually increasing number of evangelical preachers, and pastors, in *all* the various denominations; even in the American-Anglo communion itself, where there is still *too much* churchmanship, and *too little* Christianity; and we shall have reason to rejoice in the hope, nay, in the assurance, that this mighty continent is to make a very important portion of the Messiah's kingdom; not only enjoying in itself the inestimable privilege of the everlasting Gospel, but *raying* out the beams of blessedness to all other nations, remote or near.

Nevertheless, there still *is* an awful deficiency of religious instruction in these United States; as may appear from the report of the "General Assembly" of the presbyterian church, dated May 1822. This instructive and interesting document describes the state of religion within the bounds of the General Assembly of the presbyterian church; and of the General Association of congregational churches in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and the General Convention of the same persuasion, in Vermont, during the year from May 1821, to May 1822.

The General Assembly offers its thanksgivings to the Great Head of the church, for the blessing of *his* presence, and the sanctifying influences of *his* Holy Spirit, among the various religious communions. Yet they deplore the luke-warmness, and conformity to the world, still too prevalent in professing Christians; the neglect of family prayer, the want of zeal for extending the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom; and, in some few instances, dissensions and backslidings.

In some parts of the land, attempts are made to propagate the most pernicious errors. With a zeal, worthy of a better cause, and under lofty pretensions to a superior *rationality*, and to deeper discoveries in

religion, some are endeavouring to take away the crown from the Redeemer's head; to degrade *Him*, who is the mighty God, and the Prince of life, to a level with mere men, and to rob us of all our hopes of redemption through his blood. Pretending too, a more expanded benevolence to man, and more ennobled ideas of the goodness and mercy of God, they assiduously propagate the sentiment, that *all* men will ultimately obtain eternal happiness, however sinful their present temper and conduct may be; without any regard to the cleansing of the blood of atonement, or the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God.

Believing that these sentiments are *utterly* subversive of Gospel truth and holiness; that they alike dishonour God, and destroy the present and eternal welfare of men, the General Assembly warns its brethren against them; and exhorts to a steady attachment to the truth, which is *according* to godliness.

The gross vices of intemperance, profane swearing, Sabbath breaking, and gambling, still extensively exist. The excessive use of spirituous liquors, continues to produce the most deplorable effects, and threatens still greater injury. But the Assembly adverts to *one* subject with the most painful feelings. Vast sections of the country, particularly the frontiers, are *destitute* of the *stated* means of grace.

In the presbytery of Niagara, there are but *four* pastors to *twenty-six* congregations; in the presbytery of Genesee, only *two* pastors to *nineteen* congregations, of which only one enjoys the stated preaching of the Gospel more than half the time. In the presbytery of Bath, the churches are few, and most of them destitute of a ministry; there being only six ministers in nearly as many counties. Multitudes are living without God in the world, and paying not even an outward respect to the institutions of the Gospel. In many families the Scriptures are *not* to be found; and in too many instances, no desire is shown to possess them. In many places, *no* meetings for public worship are

held; and in others, such meetings are thinly attended.

In the presbytery of Champlain, many towns are destitute of a preached Gospel, and church privileges; and in the extensive presbytery of Susquehanna, there are but *ten* ministers to *twenty-six* widely-scattered congregations. Of twenty-nine congregations, in the presbytery of Erie, *twenty-one* want a stated ministry; and of thirty-three congregations, in Louisville presbytery, above half are in the same condition. The presbytery of Union requires two or three times its present number of ministers. In Grand River presbytery, there are only twelve ministers to twenty-nine congregations.

The presbytery of West Tennessee, covering a large tract, and including a population of 310,000 inhabitants, has only fourteen ministers, and *no* licentiate. The few missionaries who have traversed this region, have been well received; and much solicitude is manifested to obtain a zealous and enlightened ministry. The presbytery of Missouri covers a country nearly 300 miles square, and contains more than 120,000 inhabitants; and is nearly a moral waste. Thousands are crying for the bread of life, and many new churches might be formed, if there were enough faithful and devoted ministers. The presbytery of Mississippi embraces the two states of Mississippi and Louisiana; with a population exceeding 200,000 souls; and has only eight ministers and four licentiates.

Several important towns, rapidly increasing in population and wealth, present interesting places for missionary stations. New-Orleans contains 46,000 inhabitants, and is annually growing in all kinds of resources. The short ministry of the late lamented Mr. Larned was very useful. The presbytery of Georgia, including above half the state, has only eight ministers; and in the extensive presbytery of Concord, the ordinances and institutions of religion are hardly known.

In most of these destitute places, pernicious errors are propagated, and in all, gross immoralities abound. Removed from the benign influences of Christianity; without its powerful restraints; destitute of Sabbaths and sanctuaries; unchecked by the solemn admonitions, and uncheered by the glorious hopes of the Gospel, multitudes live in sin, and die in impenitence. Seldom does the herald of salvation raise his inviting voice among them; and seldom do the sounds of prayer and praise ascend as grateful offerings to heaven.

It is gratifying, however, to learn, that an earnest desire is felt to obtain the Gospel ministry in these destitute places. Many of the followers of Jesus pray to *Him*, to send them faithful labourers. Sabbath schools, and missionary and education societies, have been already established in some parts. In some instances, the destitute congregations persevere in maintaining public worship; and there is an increasing attention to the means of grace. In many of these places ministers have gone forth in company, two or three at a time, and preached, and visited, and God has greatly blessed their labours.

But let us turn to brighter scenes. With few exceptions, the statements from the different presbyteries show religion to be *increasing*. Infidelity is scarcely *any where* openly professed. The churches generally, are walking in peace. There is an increased attention to public ordinances; and many *new* congregations have been organized, and *new* churches erected, throughout the Union; *several* in regions which, a short time since, were an uninhabited wilderness.

The monthly concert for prayer is generally observed. Bible and catechetical classes are beneficially continued. Baptized children, with their parents, are often convened, and reminded of the solemn obligation of the baptismal covenant. Praying societies are very generally established. Sabbath schools are numerous and flourishing. Liberal patronage

has been extended to various benevolent and pious institutions; and many missionary, and education, and Bible societies are flourishing; more especially the American Bible society in increasing in funds and auxiliary institutions. Several societies to educate poor and pious youth for the Gospel ministry, have been established during the last year; and the churches begin to awake to the importance of this subject.

There are several missionary associations of young men;—that at Richmond employed eight missionaries during the last year. The members of the Dialectic Society, students in the university of North Carolina, have contributed towards endowing a professorship in the theological seminary at Princeton. Several heathen children in the island of Ceylon, and other places, are fed, clothed, and instructed by the contributions of pious females, within our presbyterian bounds.

The missionary concerns are crowned with the blessing of God. The number of missionaries is increasing, though *not* sufficiently to meet the growing demands of a rapidly increasing population. The presbyterian seminary at Princeton furnishes annually, valuable missionaries, whose labours are gratefully received, and accompanied with a blessing. God, also, still blesses several of our colleges with the influences of his Spirit. At Hamilton College, a majority of its hundred students are pious;—and at Union College seventy, out of two hundred and forty.

In addition to the *general* increase of religion, special instances of *revivals* are enumerated, in different sections of the Union. And it is stated, that the benign effects of past revivals attend these. Professing Christians are awakened to zeal and devotedness in the cause of Christ. And though the operations of the Holy Spirit on the minds of sinners, have been diversified, yet generally, they feel deep convictions of sin, with a sense of their undone condi-

tion, as transgressors of the divine law, and a discovery, that salvation can be found *only* in Christ.

Deep silence prevails in these religious assemblies. This blessed work is confined to no particular age, or sex, or class, blooming youth and hoary age; the child of seven, and the old man weighed down with the sins of threescore years and ten; the infidel, the profane, the formal, and the moralist, have *all* been brought to a sense of their *lost* condition, and to bow to the sceptre of the Prince of life, and to seek salvation from *his* hands, as his *free gift*.

Among the *means*, blessed by God, to the producing of these effects, *special prayer* has been signally successful. In many congregations, particular days have been set apart for fasting and prayer. Concerts for prayer have been held by private Christians.—Pastoral visitation, from house to house, and visitations by private Christians, with personal discourse on eternal concerns, have been also greatly blessed. In preaching, the spirituality of God's law, and its tremendous curse denounced against sin, have been explained, and pressed upon the consciences of sinners;—who have been warned of their inability to work out a justifying righteousness of *their own*, and solemnly exhorted to immediate repentance and faith in Christ.

The *fruits* of these revivals are exhibited in the moral reformation of their subjects;—in an increase of the spirit of prayer, and of liberality in supporting the Gospel.

The General Association of Connecticut shows, that the churches in that state are reaping the benefits of the late extensive, and of continuing revivals. A large proportion of the mission school, at Cornwall, is hopefully pious: and arrangements are making to extend the theological department of Yale College.

The General Association of Massachusetts declares the increase of religion, within its limits;—great revivals in Berkshire;—more than three hun-

dred young men assisted by the American Education Society ;—an increase of the missionary spirit ; in Plymouth and Norfolk counties, the establishment of a Palestine missionary society, which supports a missionary to the Holy Land. The Andover theological institution flourishes, and contains one hundred and thirty-two students.

The General Convention of Vermont shows the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom to be greatly on the increase in that state. Yet the want of faithful pastors is still felt. Of 171 churches, connected with the Convention, nearly half are vacant. But the cause of religion is advancing. Through the past year, there have been great and powerful revivals, in *fifty* towns: in each of which, from fifteen to two hundred persons have been received into the churches. These revivals still continue in many places. About *two thousand five hundred* persons have joined the churches, during the past year. In Middlebury college there has been a revival among the students, of whom two-thirds are pious. The spirit of missions is increasing in the state ; and education societies are formed, of which one aided forty young men in two years.

In many cities, efforts are made to promote the spiritual welfare of seamen. Places of worship for mariners are opened in several seaports ; and both mariners themselves and their families, have received great benefit from attending the public ordinances of the Gospel. The Assembly recommends to the ministers and members of its churches, to encourage and promote these useful institutions.

The theological seminary at Princeton still continues to enjoy the smiles of the Great Head of the church. A missionary spirit is diffused among its students : some of whom have already devoted themselves to the labours and privations of a foreign mission. The churches are already enjoying the fruits of this most important institution.

The theological seminary at Auburn, under the care of the synod of Geneva, is flourishing; and efforts are making to establish theological schools in other parts of the union.

The Assembly congratulates the churches under its care, on the recent union between the presbyterian and associate reformed communions; from which it augurs the most beneficial effects to the best interests of true religion. On the whole, the review of the past year is calculated to awaken the liveliest sensations of gratitude, for the *increased* and *increasing* spread of the everlasting Gospel, throughout the United States.

It cannot be denied, that some parts of this very interesting report proclaim a deplorable dearth of *presbyterian* clergy, in proportion to the extent of their limits, and the number of their congregations. But, not now to insist upon the bright prospects held out in the better half of this important document,—the presbyterians are *not* the only religious denomination which labours upon the ground marked out in their moral map. Other persuasions, particularly the baptists and methodists, traverse the same regions, in the service of the same redeeming God; and with signal success.

The congregationalists are not numerous, out of New-England. And the protestant episcopalians are few and feeble, in most parts of the union; particularly on the frontier settlements, and over the Alleghany hills. Besides, the American-Anglo-Church is too apt, in imitation of her *established* mother in England, to discourage, and frown upon all revivals in religion, all meetings for special prayer, and all preaching of the peculiar doctrines of the Reformation; more especially, the wholesome Scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone;—whence, *both* these churches halt in their progress, while other evangelical denominations spring forward in their career of usefulness and good.

But, in reference to this subject, it might be asked, *how far* the great body of the people of England would be from *heathen* darkness and irreligion, if they were left *entirely* to the ghostly care of their state hierarchy and state clergy? Nay, *how far* is a large proportion of them from paganism *now*: when the formalism of the national church establishment is, in some measure, continually counteracted by the evangelism of the methodists, and baptists, and orthodox dissenters?

Above all, *what* is the amount of heathenish ignorance and profligacy in Ireland, where the people have long enjoyed the threefold benefit of a state church, a popish priesthood, and a protestant dissent?

The remedy, therefore, for the deficiency of religious instruction in these United States is *not* to be found in a national church establishment;—seeing, that for the most part, the people belonging to the English and Irish state churches, are *worse* instructed, and *more* neglected, than are the members of almost every other religious community.

The principal evangelical denominations, in these United States, have instituted a *home* mission, for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of Gospel ordinances and instruction, throughout the country. From which institution, we, undoubtedly, augur more beneficial effects, than from the establishment of a formal, secular, state church. And we should hail it as a token for good, if the American-Anglo-Church would imitate the zeal, and liberality, and catholic spirit of some other Christian communions, with regard both to foreign and to domestic missions.

To say nothing of the established church of Ireland, and the gross, the criminal neglect, of so large a portion of her amply paid clergy; what *proportional* good does the richly endowed Anglican church do, towards evangelizing the people in her *ten thousand* parishes?

On the 10th of May, 1822, met in the city of New-York, a convention of delegates, to form a *domestic* missionary society. There were present, delegates, both clerical and lay, from the Northern Missionary Society, the Missionary Society of the Middle District, the eastern division of the Youth's Missionary Society of the Western District; and from those of its middle and western divisions, the New-York Evangelical Missionary Society, the Young Men's Missionary Society of New-York, the Genesee Missionary Society, and the presbytery of Albany.

The result of this propitious convention, was the *union* of the Evangelical and Young Men's Missionary Societies of New-York, and the formation of "the United Domestic Missionary Society." The avowed object of this society is to spread the Gospel among the destitute, and to assist congregations which are unable to support a Gospel ministry. It also contemplates the alliance of existing missionary societies throughout the state of New-York, and the formation of auxiliary associations in every part of the union. Its directors published an able and spirited address, calling upon the religious of all denominations, to aid in the great work of evangelizing the United States. The society has now, July 1822, *twenty-nine* zealous missionaries, labouring in various places to diffuse the light of the ever blessed Gospel.

Yet, notwithstanding all these laudable efforts on the part of the several evangelical communions, in these United States, to christianize their countrymen;—it is a grave question, which every American *statesman*, who knows and feels, that pure and undefiled religion is the great sheet anchor of human society, *ought* to ask—if there be *no* safe and effectual *medium* to be found, between making one dominant sect, so linked with the civil government, as to constitute a mere political machine, in subordination to, and at the service of, the secular arm;—and the ruling powers completely disregarding religion;—mak-

ing *no* provision for Gospel ordinances;—but leaving, so far as relates to the existing magistrates, a population, nominally Christian, to gravitate into speculative, or practical unbelief, and actual profligacy?

Cannot, as in some of the New-England states is already done, the American governments generally provide, that in every township throughout their respective jurisdictions, there shall be *some* religious ordinances and worship; still leaving to every individual the personal rights of conscience untouched, and his own choice of the particular sect, or denomination of Christianity, to which he wishes to be attached, unimpaired?

Mr. Ashmun, in his interesting and pious memoir of the late lamented Rev. Samuel Bacon, principal agent of the American government, for persons liberated from slave ships, on the coast of Africa, makes some judicious observations, in reference to this subject. He says: the country divisions, throughout New-England, unlike those of most of the other states, scarcely serve any other purpose, than to classify the population, and define the jurisdiction of magistrates and inferior courts. But the corporate rights of the *towns*, or sections, from four to six square miles, into which all the counties are subdivided, are guarded by the people as the palladium of their social prosperity.

The officers of these corporations are one, three, or five select men; an assessor, a constable, a treasurer, some tything men, a town clerk, and other inferior officers. They have power, at their annual town meetings, to pass any by-laws for their own internal regulations, not inconsistent with the laws of the state, and of the United States; and to vote any sum of money for the support of the *Gospel* and schools, and for the construction of roads. The constitution recognizes the duty of *every* citizen to contribute a just proportion of his property for the maintenance of *public worship*, and his obligation to attend upon it;

and every man is, in effect, supposed by law, to be a *congregationalist*, until the contrary is shown; there being a decided majority of that denomination in every town.

The congregationalists are called "the standing order." The increase of *other* Christian sects in the state, has raised loud complaints of the inconveniences which *they* experience from the operation of this system. The term congregationalist, in reference to the religious societies of New-England, bears a peculiar meaning. In the original sense of the word, baptists, and other Christian sects, are congregational, or independent, in their church government, or discipline. But in New-England, congregationalist means the original, and prevailing persuasion, who adopt the same system of faith, and live in Christian fellowship with the presbyterians; from whom they differ only in their ecclesiastical order and rule. The government and affairs of their church are administered by the whole congregation of communicants; *each* congregation constituting a separate and independent ecclesiastical body, which neither admits, nor exercises the control of any other. This order is, sometimes, erroneously called *presbyterian*.

The sum voted by the town meeting, is assessed on the inhabitants in proportion to their property, and forms part of the aggregate *state tax* for religious instruction and other purposes, and goes into the town treasury. Each town is divided into wards of nearly equal numbers as to inhabitants, of whom none are more than two or three miles from a school; and the sum voted is divided proportionally among the several wards. The select men, the committee man of each ward, and the clergymen of the congregational order, are, *ex officio*, a committee, to examine the town schools, to report on their proficiency, and applaud, or censure, accordingly.

In Massachusetts, the Declaration of Rights assumes, that "piety, religion, and morality," are necessary for the *temporal* welfare of society; and that the *support* of the teachers and institutions of religion

is necessary to the prevalence and influence of religion itself. It is declared to be the duty of *every* person to contribute an equitable proportion towards the maintenance of religious institutions; and, where no "*conscientious*" impediment exists, occasionally to attend some place of public worship. It is also declared to be the privilege of every town or parish, to *choose* its own religious teachers; and among the ministers so chosen, every individual may direct the application of *his own* tax.

All preference to any particular protestant sect, is distinctly disclaimed; yet objections are made to this system, not merely by the irreligious, who wish to see Christianity, under every form, abolished; but also, by some conscientious persons, who, being too weak, and too few, in their respective parishes, to obtain and provide, according to law, for a minister of *their own*, are obliged to contribute to the support of one, in whose election they do *not* concur, and on whose ministrations they do *not* attend.

But still the expediency of the system must be tried by the fact of its general advantages outweighing its partial inconveniences. A majority of the New-England states, until very recently, has always decided in favour of its general beneficial tendency.

Another class of persons are honestly opposed to the principle of *any* legal interference in matters of religion. But this is going farther than the framers of the federal constitution thought proper to go. They merely prohibited the general government from setting up any one particular Christian persuasion, as the dominant state sect, enjoying the exclusive and odious monopoly of a national church establishment, to the proscription and depression of every other religious denomination. The experience of all human history proves, that no civil government *can* prosper without the sanctions of religion, whose *support*, therefore, by the public magistrate, seems to be a duty of *self-preservation*.

The union of these two classes, in Massachusetts, seconded by the indifference of too many, to all religion, and religious institutions, obtained, in the *new* state constitution, framed in the year 1821, a considerable modification of the old law upon this subject.

It cannot, indeed, be denied, that the congregational order, almost exclusively privileged by the operation of the former system, did, *sometimes*, as dominant sects are apt to do, assert and enforce their legal rights, in a manner little calculated to conciliate the affections of their dissenting brethren. For example, when the clergyman, for whose support the money was assessed, *distrained* and sold the goods of those persons of *other* denominations, who refused to pay the tax. This cast much popular odium upon the congregational body;—for it enabled the recusant to employ the same language, which an English or Irish dissenter might most rightfully use, in relation to the *tithe tax* of the Anglican and Hibernian church establishments; namely—“that his goods had been sacrificed for the support of a religious system which he did *not* like,—of a clergyman, whom he only knew as an oppressor,—of a form of worship, which he never attended.”

The question is of difficult solution, either way. The evangelical dispensation, doubtless demands the *voluntary* contributions of Christians, to support its institutions. But the members of a Christian community may consent to give to these contributions the form of an equable tax. But the difficulty is, *how* to apportion this tax among the various denominations, without unduly exalting and privileging one, at the expense, and to the oppression of all the other sects.

Under their social institutions, of which the public provision for the support of religion constituted a prominent article, the New-England states have acquired a deserved reputation, for a high religious and moral character; with which, at this hour, *no*

other Christian country, of equal population, can compete.

Mr. Bacon says: that in New-England, the laws of the several states are generally *better* executed, than in the middle and southern sections of the Union. Religion is *much more* generally attended to; education is fostered, and good morals are protected. But the lower classes have a low cunning and intrigue, which is dangerous to a less suspicious, and a more ignorant people. *This* class, finding their own laws too strict for them, generally remove to some distant part of the United States, where their arts and deceptions find more room for action. Go among the people of New-England, and you will find them intelligent, hospitable, moral, religious. Their chief characteristics are enterprize, perseverance, shrewdness, industry, and economy.

But Mr. Bacon is unusually severe upon the congregationalists; in the year 1817, he says: as to the religion of New-England, the *standing order* not unfrequently exercise persecution. They grasp at all offices, and having the law on their side, make all contribute to *their* worship, who do not produce written testimony, that they contribute to some other mode. Every one must go to church once in three months, under a penalty; and Sabbath breaking is a crime of no small magnitude. Yet too much hypocrisy may sometimes be seen under the demure garb and face of a congregationalist, as well as others. It is predicted, that the *unnatural* union of church and state will take place in New-England, if not guarded against. The standing order will probably grow more and more arrogant and powerful, if the laws in their favour be *not* relaxed.

This censure, however, seems hardly justifiable; for *what* has given to New-England her superior character, but the superior conduct of the congregationalists; all other denominations being weak and scanty in the eastern states? Besides, as Mr. Bacon was, for some years previous to his death, himself emi-

nently pious, he could *not* possibly disapprove of the care taken in New-England to keep the Sabbath holy; which is a positive command of God, and one of the main preservatives of Christianity in a country. And, doubtless, were he living now, no one would more sincerely rejoice to acknowledge the actual beneficial tendency of the congregational system in New-England; which, notwithstanding its legal patronage, has *not* sunk into dead formality, and general conformity to the world; but has been for some years past, and is now, exhibiting numerous instances of extensive revivals of religion, and of genuine growth in grace.

In whatever way the question, as to the propriety of the *mode*, in which the New-England states interfere, to provide for the *support* of the Gospel, be finally determined; it is self-evident, that there can be *no* stability for the American, or for any other political institutions, if once a majority, or even a considerable proportion of the population become infidels, whether baptized or unbaptized.

And in the existing portentous condition of the whole world, no statesman, who has the welfare of the federal union bound up in the bundle of his own life and feeling, can desire to see the evil of *national* irreligion, added to those trying circumstances of this country, the prevention, or the remedy of which requires the full conjunction of political wisdom, and political fortitude; namely the commercial embarrassments, the agricultural depression, the unsettled finance, both of the general government and of the chartered banks; the constant clashings of the various codes of municipal law; the frequent and growing collisions between the several state sovereignties and the federal judiciary; and, above all, the *Missouri* question, which, of itself, is pregnant with an Iliad of woes, in the mutual exasperation of the slave holding and the other states.

Perhaps the *only*, certainly the most efficacious, remedy for these, and for *all other* national evils, whether

present or prospective, is to be found in the general conversion of the people to real, evangelical Christianity ; alike alien and abhorrent from all sectarian bigotry, and all irreligious indifference.

One plain, practical inference from the preceding facts and observations, in regard to the American-Anglo-Church, is, that if she suffers *formalism* to pervade her communion generally, she *must* languish and die. But if her clergy, as a body, faithfully teach and practise the *evangelical* truths and doctrines of their own liturgy, articles, and homilies, she will live and prosper, and not long continue *so much* in the wake of other Christian denominations, in numbers, talent, learning, influence, and utility.

It is but justice to state, that *as a church*, she still professes to cleave to her articles, transcribed from those of her established mother in England. In the "Pastoral Letter to the clergy and laity of the protestant episcopal church, from the bishops of the same," issued at the General Convention in May 1820, the evangelical doctrines of the public formularies of the American-Anglo-Church, are distinctly recognized and recommended. Consequently, if she do *not* suffer herself to be *consolidated* into one single, universal bishopric, by the paramount ascendancy of any particular diocese, in which evangelism is proscribed, she may yet lift her head aloft, among the other Christian churches throughout the Union.

But if she be ever melted down into one uniform mass of consolidation, her death warrant is from that moment signed, and sealed, and on the verge of instant execution. For, in comparison with the truly Scriptural doctrines of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches, the creed of a full fledged formalist is cruder than the undigested *crapula* of an habitual drunkard.

If there be only one dominant diocese in the United States, and that diocese proscribes evangelism, and promulgates formal, popish tenets ; then the *whole* American-Anglo-Church becomes virtually an

integral part of the papal hierarchy, and totters to its fall. But if such diocese be *not* suffered to swallow up all the rest in its ravenous maw, then *it* only may remain in the Egyptian darkness of formalism, and surrounding dioceses may, by preaching the pure Gospel faithfully and fervently, erect a wall of fire round about, making the formal darkness more visible by the contrast of evangelical light; some of which might possibly penetrate into the frozen mass, and infuse heat and life into the coldness of death. And if not, only a *part*, instead of the whole of the American-Anglo-Church is doomed to destruction, by the substitution of formalism in the place of Christianity.

It is *this* consideration which gives so much importance to the question, whether or not *any one* single diocese shall eventually gain such an ascendancy, as to command the whole protestant episcopal body throughout the union; and thus, in effect, rear a popedom in the western world, while that in the elder hemisphere is hastening to decay?

These anticipations were suggested in consequence of the efforts *repeatedly* made in the general convention of the American-Anglo-Church, by the diocesan delegation from New-York, to substitute voting by *parishes*, in the room of voting by *states*, in the general convocations of the protestant episcopal communion. A measure, the inevitable effects of which, let us pause a moment to contemplate.

In the first place, look at the facility with which episcopal parishes may be multiplied *indefinitely*, in the diocese of New-York, under the provisions of the statute respecting religious incorporations. A very few individuals meet together, and agree to become an episcopal parish; and forthwith, a lay reader is appointed by the bishop, and a lay delegate admitted to the state convention.

In many of these parishes, *no* clergyman ever has been, or is ever likely to be settled; whence the preponderance of lay over clerical delegates in the diocesan

convention. In October 1820, they were sixty-seven to forty-seven; nearly half as many more. Thus, if the scheme of *parish*-voting be ever carried into effect, the diocese of New-York will, at all times, be able to spin, out of *her own* bowels, a sufficient majority in the general convention of the American-Anglo-Church. This faculty of parish-making enables the protestant episcopal communion in the diocese of New-York, to loom *much larger* upon paper, in conversation, and in speeches, than she is, in reality, to the eye of the inquirer, who seeks to discover the aliquot parts of her ostensible aggregate.

This plan of voting by parishes, instead of by states, in the lower house of the general convention, is in direct *contradiction* to the intention of the original framers of that venerable body; and if once permitted to prevail, would infallibly jeopardize the spiritual interests of the whole American-Anglo-Church. The intention of the conventional body, which laid the foundations of the present protestant episcopal church in the United States, was, to preserve each diocese separate, and independent of all other dioceses, and subject only to the authority of the church universal, in general convention assembled.

It was emphatically designed to prevent, if possible, just *such a consolidation*, as would enable one large diocese to swallow up all the smaller dioceses, and erect itself into a rival of the Roman see, in this western hemisphere. In like manner, as in the senate of the United States, each separate state is represented by two senatorial votes; the smallest, standing on an equal ground of political sovereignty, with the largest; in order to preserve the confederacy, and prevent the consolidation of the several United States into one solitary imperial throne.

The confederacy of the separate dioceses would soon be melted down into one aggregate episcopal mass, if the parish-voting scheme should become a canon, or law, binding the whole American-Anglo-

Church to spiritual obedience. For then, a majority being constantly secured in the general convention, decrees may be fulminated at will, from the New-York diocesan chair, over all the protestant episcopal church in the United States;—as bulls bellow from the Vatican, over the entire circle of the pope-dom.

For, suppose the plan of voting by parishes, instead of by states, to be accomplished, and the general convention, in consequence, subjected to the control of the New-York diocesan, what *must* be the condition of the whole American-Anglo-Church, when thus consolidated under the dominion of one universal bishop? Suppose, at any time hereafter, a New-York diocesan to arise, who shall labour under the popish, or the pelagian infection;—are American protestant episcopalians, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, prepared to incur the hazard of seeing *that* church, to redeem which from the superstition, the idolatry, the blood-guiltiness of popery, their venerable ancestors in England, gave their own living bodies a voluntary sacrifice to the flames, the gibbet, and the rack,—*again* transformed into an integral portion of the papal hierarchy?

In fine, we are thoroughly convinced, that the cause of pure, evangelical, vital Christianity, would *not* be promoted in these United States, by a national church establishment, exalting one particular sect into exclusive dominion, and wealth, and political importance;—to the proscription, and oppression of all other denominations.

Immediately after the ascension of its Almighty founder, Christianity experienced, according to his own predictions and warnings, the increasing enmity of a corrupt and an idolatrous world. During the first three centuries of its progress, it was called upon to struggle with, and to suffer from the implacable malignity of the Jews, the captious ingenuity of the Greeks, and the political power of the Ro-

mans. Yet, under all the persecutions, general and local, imperial and popular, Christianity increased daily, and spread itself over every corner of the then discovered world.

Tertullian says, in his Apology, that in the third century, Christians were to be found in the camp, in the senate, in the palace;—every where but in the heathen temples, and at the theatrical exhibitions. They filled the cities, the country, and the islands of the sea. So many of all ranks, and either sex, and every age, embraced the Christian faith, that the pagans deplored the desertion of their temples, and the ruin of their ecclesiastical revenues. By the time, says bishop Porteus, in his Evidences of Christianity, the *empire* became Christian, there is every reason to believe, that the Christians were *more* numerous, and *more* powerful, than the pagans.

Which consideration induced Constantine to make the *first* established national Christian church;—a measure, that injured Christianity infinitely more, than all the *ten* bloody persecutions of his pagan predecessors. The new state church soon produced an abundant harvest of schisms, and heresies, and general corruption of doctrine, discipline, and morals. The Christian religion now, in consequence of the existence of a church establishment, was professed by numbers, *not* from any conviction of its truth and obligation, but from interested, secular motives. And whatever attention was paid to the form of exterior churchmanship, the power and influence of *real* religion on the hearts and lives of its professors, were awfully diminished, and darkened nearly to extinction.

The *same* century, which saw the establishment of the *first* national, or state church by Constantine, also witnessed the diffusion of *Arianism* over a vast proportion of Christendom. This heresy was patronized by several of Constantine's imperial successors, the legal supreme secular heads of the established church; and, of course, spread widely

among the state clergy, and the state nobility, who were both looking up to their civil rulers for ecclesiastical and lay promotion and emolument.

Superstition, likewise, as well as heresy, was another blessing, derived from a secular church establishment. And in the following century, the bishop of Rome modestly announced *himself* to be the head and sovereign of the universal church; and the mummeries and blasphemies of an idolatrous, sanguinary system, were substituted for the religion of Jesus Christ. Cardinal Bellarmin himself, perhaps, the ablest, the most subtle, and the most determined of all the enemies of protestantism, has, unwittingly, acknowledged the corrupt state of the Roman church, in the very act of inveighing against the great fathers and founders of the Reformation.

“For some years,—says Bellarmin, before the Lutheran and Calvinistic *heresies* were published, there was *not*, as contemporary authors testify, any severity in ecclesiastical judicatories, *any* discipline, with regard to morals, *any* knowledge of sacred literature, *any* reverence for divine things; there was *not* almost, *any* religion remaining.”

Then, Bellarmin himself being witness, was *no* reformation of religion wanted? Humanly speaking, it would *not* have been possible to fasten *popery* upon Christendom, as it was fastened from the sixth to the sixteenth century, if there had *never* been a national church establishment fixed, and interwoven with the secular government. Now, mark the *contrast* between Christianity, as it was exhibited *before* and *after* its amalgamation with the state.

Wherever Christianity has prevailed in its purity, and precisely *in proportion* to the evangelism of its doctrine; setting forth the fall of man from his primeval innocence;—the original and natural depravity of the human heart;—the necessity of conversion, or spiritual regeneration;—the justification of sinners by faith in Christ, as the *sole* author and finisher of salvation;—the sanctification of the human spirit by

the Holy Ghost ;—the Godhead of the three Divine persons in one mysterious Trinity ;—have individual purity of morals and national prosperity and happiness uniformly flourished.

Wherever Christianity spread its mild and benignant light, the waste and wilderness of life began to bloom as the paradise of God ; the nations of the earth became purified and exalted in all their moral and intellectual faculties ; they were freed from the fetters of political, social, and domestic slavery ; they were more advanced in skill and knowledge, more deeply versed in science, more accomplished in literature, more alive to industry and enterprise, more refined in all social intercourse, more adorned with every nobler virtue and every polished grace, more benevolent to man, more devoted to God.

But the dawning of this brightest day was soon overcast with clouds and thick darkness ;—*superstition* soon poisoned the waters of life in their springs and in their sources ;—*a superstition* which lulled to rest all fears of future punishment, while it sanctioned and encouraged the commission of every crime :—which held out incitements to the most profligate ambition, and provided for the indulgence of the most sensual sloth ; *a superstition*, whose imposing ceremonies were interwoven with all the institutions of secular society ; and whose spirit of delusion was diffused throughout all the principles of *civil* government.

The *corruptions* of Christianity soon began to darken, and gradually to extinguish the lights of the understanding and the sensibilities of the heart ; so that a greater and a more stupendous mass of ignorance and iniquity, than had *ever yet* oppressed the earth, was exhibited in the moral and intellectual death of ten successive centuries. The whole circumference of Christendom was veiled in the darkest pall of civil and religious bondage ; the human conscience was benighted amidst the terrors of the dungeon, the rack, the gibbet, and the flame ; the

persons of men were delivered over a prey to the perpetuity of feudal anarchy and boisterous brigandage; of castellated feuds; of partisan warfare; of hereditary hostility; of arbitrary incarceration; of inquisitorial torment; of military execution; of private assassination; of public pillage; of universal oppression; of rapes, robberies, murders, massacres, conflagrations, and all the unutterably numerous and diversified calamities, incident to suffering and afflicted humanity, when force and fraud are the arbiters of right and wrong.

Mr. Addison, writing in the reign of Queen Ann, under the full beatitude of a *protestant* national church establishment, bears, undesignedly indeed, testimony to the important position, that religion flourishes better, and is purer *without*, than *with* the political conjunction of the secular government.

In his Evidences of the Christian Religion, he says: I should be thought to advance a paradox, should I affirm, that there were *more* Christians in the world, during those times of persecution, the three centuries *before* Constantine made the first state church, than there are *at present* in these, which we call the flourishing times of Christianity. But this will be found an *indisputable* truth, if we form our calculation upon the opinions, which prevailed in those days, that every one, who lives in the habitual practice of *any* voluntary sin, actually cuts himself off from the benefit and profession of Christianity, and whatever he may call himself, is in reality, *no* Christian, nor ought to be esteemed as such.

If *this* rule of the primitive, *unestablished* religion were applied as the test of the Christianity of all the clerical and lay members of the Anglican and Hibernian state churches; it is to be feared, that the *real* Christians in those national ecclesiastical establishments, would turn out to be, *comparatively*, a very little flock.

In these United States, the different church governments are similar to those in England. Perhaps

the greatest variance exists between the outward organization of the American-Anglo and the Anglican churches. In the United States, the annual or biennial convention of each diocese, and the triennial convention of all the several dioceses, consist of lay, as well as of clerical delegates; and therefore exhibit more of a representative form of government, than the established church displays in England, where, since the extinction or disuse of the houses of convocation, the state clergy are collected in mass, only at the visitations, whether episcopal or archidiaconal. Nay, in convocation, no laics sate as members. In the United States, at the diocesan convention, the bishop presides *ex officio*; at the triennial, or general convention, the bishops collectively form an upper house; while the clerical and lay deputies constitute a lower house. Each separate church is governed by its rector, church wardens, and vestrymen.

In the American-Anglo-Church there is *no* ostensible patronage; no bishoprics, nor benefices, in the gift of the government, or nobles, or gentry, or bishops, or colleges, or chapters, or canons, or lay incorporations, as in England; where there is neither voice nor election, on the part of the people to whose immortal souls spiritual services are to be administered. But even in these United States, a spurious species of patronage exists: for example, if a bishop happens to be an active, dexterous, managing man, he contrives to fill most of the vacancies in his diocese, with clerks after his own heart.

Now, if such a bustling, busy prelate be fully indoctrinated in exclusive churchmanship, baptismal regeneration, term and condition salvation, and the other dogmas of the modern fashionable protestant papist theology, he naturally labours to fasten similar theologues upon all vacant parishes, as the only clergy that are orthodox; while he denounces as "unsound, irregular, weak, fanatical, methodistic, and Calvinistic," those ministers, who maintain the truly

evangelical doctrines of the Reformation, embodied in the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Anglican church. The bishop, in the United States, as in England, is the executive chief of the clergy in his diocese; but his hand is *not* strengthened to do mischief by any flagitious act of parliament.

The presbyterian form of church government, in the United States, resembles a representative republic; consisting of a parity of ministers, lay delegates or elders, the clerical moderator, chosen as president, or speaker of the house, met together for the despatch of ecclesiastical business, in their general assemblies, which superintend and guide all the particular synods and presbyteries throughout the union; while each separate congregation is governed by a church session, comprised of lay elders and deacons, over whom the minister presides, *ex officio*. Each session is amenable to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of its own presbytery, as each presbytery is subject to the superior dominion of its particular synod; and all the churches are under the authority of the general assembly.

The methodists, in the United States, are governed altogether by their clergy; *no* lay delegates being admitted to their conference or general convention. The laity are held under a very strict surveillance by the classes, and monthly and quarterly meetings; all establishing a very minute and vigilant police over the conduct of every member of the society, both male and female.

The congregationalists, or independents, whether pedo or adult baptists, profess to make each separate congregation a separate church, *sui juris*; admitting no appeal to any ulterior or higher ecclesiastical tribunal. This form of church government is an unmixed democracy, each member of the congregation, male and female, young and old, high and low, rich and poor, one with another having a vote in all church matters; and every controversy being settled by the whole congregation meeting together, and

talking and voting. Whence are apt, sometimes, to arise distraction and tumult.

No means are provided for preserving an orthodox standard of faith among the several churches, as one body; in consequence of which, too many of the independents, both in England and in America, have declined in discipline, and deteriorated in doctrine; have glided down from Calvinism into Arminianism; thence to Arianism, thence to Socinianism, thence to deism, or atheism, or nothing, till the day of reckoning comes. A superior ecclesiastical tribunal, unconnected with any particular congregation, and guided by an evangelical creed, as a standard of faith, appears to be the best mode that can be devised, of watching over, and preventing or punishing any laxity of discipline, or deviation in doctrine, that might taint with its leperous instilment, any portion of the visible church, over which it presides.

CHAPTER III.

On the Anglican Church Establishment.

A SLIGHT examination of Mr. Wilks's own exhortations to the laity, state bishops, and established clergy of England, would show, that the Anglican national church establishment is *not* peculiarly calculated to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in that country. But such an examination must be deferred to a future opportunity. At present, it is sufficient to notice *two* particulars; *one*, the constant call for a *better*, that is to say, a religious and Christian, instead of a formal and worldly direction of the *patronage* of the church of England; *the other*, the deplorable condition of the *evangelical* clergy in the English ecclesiastical establishment; neglected and discouraged by the civil government; frowned upon and persecuted by the hierarchy; reviled and calumniated by the whole host of clerical state formalists.

The incessant cry of Mr. Wilks, Mr. Wilberforce, Dr. Chalmers, the Christian Observer, and other most respectable religious writers, in the British empire, that it is the bounden and imperative duty of the English government, and bishops, and nobility, and gentry, to give a *different* course to their church patronage; to turn it from a secular and political, into a pious and evangelical channel; is a *virtual acknowledgment*, that the national establishment is *not* exactly calculated, much less, absolutely necessary, to promote piety, and prevent paganism.

He who excuses, *accuses* himself, says the French proverb. Dr. Chalmers, in the very act of maintaining the usefulness, nay, the necessity of a national church establishment, emphatically warns the rulers of Britain, that if they *will* persist in filling their state hierarchy with ungodly, formal, worldly bishops, and priests, they *must* expect the speedy overthrow of their national church, at all events; and perhaps the subversion of their civil governments.

But *how* is the Anglican Church patronage to become better? By its patrons, whether in or out of the cabinet ministry, becoming themselves *personally* pious? In *what* way? These men now promote only formal bishops and clerks; and what *very little* preaching they ever hear, proceeds from the lips of their own ecclesiastical *élèves*. Where then are they to learn any evangelism, or to discover the importance of an evangelical clergy in promoting the best interests of the nation, by establishing the government in the heart affections of a religious and loyal people?

The British government is called upon to make evangelical bishops; and the English bishops and other patrons are exhorted to bestow their benefices upon evangelical clerks. But what piety is to be promoted, or expected, in consequence of the patronage and exertions of formal bishops, and formal priests; whose *possession* of all the prominent posts of the established church, is *implied* in the very call for *another*, an evangelical system of clerical promotion.

Are the perpetually shifting and fluctuating bodies of men, which, from time to time, compose the British cabinet, expected to be evangelically inclined? And if not, how is the Anglican Church to obtain evangelical bishops? Is there a single instance to be found in all human history, of the men, who constitute executive administrations, under *any* form of government, being *generally* evangelical? Have they

not, always, been generally either open, avowed infidels, or, at best, merely decent, exterior, secular formalists? And do such men promote evangelical clerks, whose Gospel preaching, and holy lives, would be a continual condemnation of their patron's infidelity or formalism?

An irreligious, formal man, has no more desire to promote piety, or advance pious persons, than an illiterate man feels to help forward learning or learned persons. In either case, it would be letting in light, to discover the patron's own darkness; an exhibition, which no one peculiarly covets. A strong argument this, in itself, against linking a Christian church with a secular government; and subjecting its clergy to the patronage and control of mere intriguing, ambitious politicians.

It should seem vain then, even for such distinguished men as Mr. Wilberforce and Dr. Chalmers, to call upon the British government to give an evangelical direction to their church patronage; seeing that irreligious men never promote any but formal clerks, except by mistake, or accident, or compulsion. And *when* is it surmised, that the constantly changing squadrons, which fill up the British, or any other existing administration, are to become personally pious, *before* the Millennium sets in? And, *until* they are, it is idle to hope, that worldly, secular men will *voluntarily* bestow their ecclesiastical patronage, on other than their own resemblances. *Similis simili gaudet*, in church, as well as in state.

The same course of reasoning applies equally to *all* the other patrons of the Anglican Church, whether they be lay or clerical; whence the natural inference is, that the English national ecclesiastical establishment will *remain* as it has *always* been, for the most part, throughout her palaces and parishes, formal, worldly, irreligious, ungodly, until a decided majority of the British people shall sweep her from off the face of the earth, as a cumberer of the ground.

Mr. Wilks, Mr. Wilberforce, the British Review, nay, even good old John Newton himself, all assume it, *as given*, that if the Anglican state church establishment ceases, the church of England perishes, as a matter of course; which, by the way, is no great compliment to her apostolic purity, that she cannot stand a single moment upon her own legs; but must be supported by parliamentary crutches, and guided by the leading strings of the lord high chancellor, and the first lord of the treasury. And they also assume, that as a necessary consequence of the evanishing of the English church, all the people of England are to become, in due time, as dark and dismal heathens, as any of the negroes in the interior of Africa, or as Mr. Jefferson's red brethren, the aboriginal Indians, on this American continent.

Now, not to insist, these gentlemen themselves being judges, that the continuance of a *formal* patronage, on the part of the government, the nobility, gentry, and hierarchy of England, is the surest of all possible means to destroy their national church establishment; *neither* of these assumptions appears to be founded either on fact or argument. For, in the first place, the Anglican Church, as a body, would be much more purely religious *without*, than *with*, the unnatural union and alliance between her and the secular government;—and, secondly, if the church of England perish, it is very possible for the Christian religion to find an existence in *other* Christian denominations.

Do men read, and believe the Bible as the infallible word of God, when they opine that Christianity will perish in Britain, in the event of the English church ceasing to be a national state establishment? Do they seriously think, that the *church of Christ* depends for its preservation and existence upon the enactments of the British imperial parliament, the *cong   d'eslire* of George the fourth, and the cabinet patronage of lord viscount Eldon, and the earl of Liverpool?

In these United States, there is *no* national church establishment; and although there is *too much* formalism in our protestant episcopal communion, yet she is *proportionally* purer, and more evangelical in her doctrines, and in the conduct of her clergy, than is her established mother in England; whence the fair inference is, that the Anglican Church would be less formal, less secular, less irreligious, if she were not encumbered by the control and patronage of the civil government, but left to her own evangelical efforts, as are all the Christian denominations in this country.

And surely, the Christian religion would *not* perish in Britain, if the Church of England died; seeing, that there is *more* evangelism *out* of, than *in*, the establishment *now*, notwithstanding the existence of a state church. And *how* would there be *less* religion among other denominations, if she should *cease* to offer a continual high bounty for the general production and diffusion of formalism and ungodliness, throughout the nation, by her close and intimate alliance with the state? if she should *cease* to proscribe all evangelism alike in her own, as well as in other communions?

In his very sensible preface to the Memoirs of Mrs. Savage, the daughter of Philip, and the sister of Matthew Henry, an excellent woman, worthy of such a father and such a brother, Mr. Jay says,—an inspection of these papers shows us, that a *dissent* from the national church may be founded in conviction, as well as education; and does *not* necessarily imply a fastidious, or a factious disposition; that it does *not* render its subject blind to what is good or excellent in the doctrine and liturgy of the establishment, or prevent prayer for its success, or rejoicing in its welfare. It shows us too, how little it encourages disaffection to civil obedience, or forbids rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.

Could the diaries of Mrs. Savage's times be explored, what a *contrast* would be found between the sentiments

such worthies confessed before God in their most sacred moments, and those charged upon them by their calumniating adversaries. Take the following extract from the journal of her honoured father, when deprived of his living for conscience sake. May 29, 1663, a thanksgiving day for the king's return; *a mercy in itself*, for which the Lord be praised, though I, and many more, suffer by it.

That any clergyman, cast out of his benefice by the execrable Bartholomew act, should praise the Lord for the return of Charles the second to England, does seem to be a marvellous effort of Christian charity, and the utmost stretch of human loyalty. It should *not* be forgotten, that the ejection of such ministers as Philip Henry, and Richard Baxter, and others, of whom the world was not worthy, from the church of England, was one of the signal blessings conferred upon religion, by the national establishment; doubtless, to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in the country,

The Great Head of the church has declared that *He* will always preserve it; and consequently, there is no cause of alarm, that the church of Christ will perish, even if the church of England should follow the fate of her Asian sisters. But *why* should the English protestant episcopal communion perish, from the mere circumstance of her ceasing to be joined in political alliance with the civil government of Britain?

The secular rulers of the empire, to be sure, would cease to make formal bishops; the patrons of the establishment, whether lay or clerical, noble or gentle, would cease, either to sell or give ecclesiastical benefices to clerks, in whose call the people who support, and are expected to hear the preacher, have *no* voice. The established priests would cease to receive immense revenues for *not* doing the duty of evangelists; and the nation at large, would be eased from the galling burden of an oppressive tithe tax.

But the truly Christian part of that church would remain, and evangelical clergy and laity would be found to support it, in purity and in strength; *far better* than it now appears in all its secular splendour and corruption. In these United States, the American-Anglo-Church does *not* perish, because it has no political alliance with the civil government; but it flourishes in *proportion* to its evangelism; as do all Christian denominations, when left fairly to themselves, and not impeded by a perpetual bounty, on the part of the state, for the production of a formal, worldly, irreligious clergy.

Persons who have never lived out of England, have no adequate opportunity of knowing how religion is to subsist, when left to find her own level, without the interference, and free from the close embrace of the civil magistrate. The English people never see Christianity, but as embodied in one dominant state sect, clothed with power, rioting in wealth, and proscribing, and discountenancing all other denominations; which, nevertheless, are *compelled* to contribute to the support of the national priesthood, as well as to maintain their own clergy. In recompense for which, they are put under the ban of the empire; the brand of religious disability is stamped upon them; and they are *excluded* from all equal participation in the political claims, rights, privileges, and offices of their country.

Under such circumstances, and always seeing religion inseparably blended with state policy, what *can* the English people know about the progress of Christianity, when left entirely to the guidance of its almighty Author and Head; and to the evangelical efforts of *his own* ministers of reconciliation?

It is quite childish to suppose, that the arm, whether civil or military, of the British, or of any other government, is necessary *to preserve alive* the church of Christ. Its divine Master has promised to be always with her to the end of the world. And he *has* always, hitherto protected her, alike against the nefarious

efforts of all *opposing*, and against, what is infinitely worse, the unhallowed assistance of all *allied* governments.

If the Anglican church establishment were swept away, there would *not* be one ray of real religion less in England then, than there is now. The sincerely pious members of that church, who are conscientiously attached to her external order, form of worship, and evangelical doctrines, would still be protestant episcopalians. And *only* the formal, secular clergy and laity, who are now devout by act of parliament, would desert her, if their worldly interests prompted, and either embrace some other, or *no* sect, according to circumstances. Christianity would still be the *common law* of the land, and as such, be protected against all gross, overt acts and misdemeanors, without the oppressive and wasteful incumbrance of an exclusive national church; in the same manner as it is so protected in these United States.

There would be less bounty for formalism, and a more effectual demand for real religion; which flourishes most, with the least possible intermixture of political rank, ambition, affluence, and intrigue. The British government would be incalculably *stronger*; because then the British people would be more religious, more contented, more united, more loyal, than they are now, when *one-third* of the population is kept in continual exasperation by the galling weight of an expensive state church, and their own political proscription; and the *other two-thirds* are, daily and hourly, becoming more and more alienated by the perverse perseverance of their rulers, in filling the national establishment with a formal hierarchy and a formal clergy.

The people of the United States generally are *much more* unanimously and cordially attached to their political governments, and social institutions, than are the inhabitants of the British Isles to theirs. One main reason of which is, that they are *not* cursed

with that everlasting source of individual, domestic, and national discord, a state church.

Dr. Chalmers seems inclined to take it for granted, that if it were *not* for the Scottish church establishment, Scotland would be a heathen wilderness. But if so, *how* is it, that the reverend doctor himself, and his evangelical brethren, both clergy and laity, bear *so small* a proportion, not one-fifth, to the whole formal body of kirk members? If so, *why* is there more evangelism *out* of, than *in* the established kirk? Does Dr. Chalmers deliberately think, that there would be one single beam of piety *less* in Scotland to-morrow, if the kirk establishments were to abscond this night; and the lord commissioner, as representing the British monarch in the general assembly, transferred to some other secular employment; and the lay patronage abolished, and the Scottish people permitted to choose *their own* pastors?

Listen, for a few moments, to the opinion of some eminent divines, as to the existence of the church of Christ depending upon the continuance of any one particular sect, or portion of the visible church.

How does the Greek church subsist? asks the apostolic bishop Horne. Like the tree that had suffered excision, in the dream of the Chaldean monarch; its root indeed remains in the earth, with a band of iron and brass, and it is wet with the dew of heaven, until certain times shall have passed over it; at the expiration of which, it may come into remembrance before God, and again bud, and put forth its branches, and bear fruit, for the shadow and support of nations yet unknown. But its present condition is not to be envied or coveted. The Mahomedan power has been raised up to be the Pharaoh, the Nebuchadnezzar, the Antiochus Epiphanes of these last days, to the eastern churches.

Let those, therefore, that *now* stand, be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die, *lest* they also fall. The promise of divine protection, and of indefectible subsistence, is *not*

made to any *particular* church, or churches, but to the *church of Christ*, in general; and as the seven churches of Asia have long almost wholly disappeared; and the glory of the Greek church has for ages been wretchedly obscured; so may *any* church or churches, however flourishing now, be, one day, equally obscured, and even wholly extinguished and forgotten.

The promise of perpetual stability, says the mighty Horsley, is to the *church catholic*; it affords *no* security to *any* particular church, *if* her faith or her works be not found perfect before God. The time shall *never* be, when a *true* church of God shall not be *somewhere* subsisting on the earth; but *any* individual church, *if* she fall from her first love, may sink in ruins. Of this, history furnishes but too abundant proof, in the examples of churches, once illustrious, planted by the Apostles, watered with the blood of the first saints and martyrs, which are now no more.

Where are now the seven churches of Asia, whose praise is in the Apocalypse? Where are those boasted seals of Paul's apostleship, the churches of Corinth and Philippi? Where are the churches of Jerusalem and Alexandria? Let us not defraud ourselves of the benefit of the dreadful example, by the miserable subterfuge of a rash judgment upon others, and an invidious comparison of their deservings with our own. Let us not place a *vain* confidence in the purer worship, the better discipline, the sounder faith, which, for two centuries and a half, we have enjoyed. These things are *not* our merits; they are God's gifts; and the security we may derive from them, will depend on the *use* we make of them.

Let us not abate, let us rather add to, our zeal for the propagation of the Gospel in distant parts; but let us *not* forget that we have duties nearer home. Let us of the ministry give heed to *ourselves* and to our flocks; let us give an anxious and diligent heed to

their spiritual concerns. Let us all, but let the younger clergy more especially, beware how they become *secularized* in the general cast and fashion of their lives. Let them *not* think it enough to maintain a certain *frigid decency* of character, abstaining from the gross scandal of open riot, and criminal dissipation; but giving *no farther* attention to their spiritual duties, than may be consistent with the pursuits and pleasures of the world.

The time *may* come, *sooner* than we think, when it shall be said, *where* is now the church of England? Let us betimes take warning; as many as I love I rebuke, and chasten, said our Lord to the church of Laodicea, whose worst crime it was that she was neither hot nor cold. Be zealous, therefore, and *repent*.

Hear also, upon this subject, an American divine, who equals Horne in evangelical piety, and rivals Horsley in gigantic talent.

The long existence of the *Christian* church would be pronounced, upon common principles of reasoning, impossible. She finds in *every* man a natural and inveterate enemy. To encounter and overcome the unanimous hostility of the world, she boasts no political stratagem, no disciplined legions, no outward coercion. Yet her expectation is, that she shall live for ever. To mock this hope, and blot out her memorial from under heaven, the most furious efforts of fanaticism, the most ingenious arts of statesmen, the concentrated strength of empires, have been frequently and perseveringly applied. The blood of her sons and of her daughters has streamed like water; the smoke of the scaffold and of the stake, where they won the crown of martyrdom in the cause of Jesus, has ascended in thick volumes to the skies. The tribes of persecution have sported over her woes, and erected monuments, as they imagined, of her perpetual ruin.

But *where* are her tyrants, and *where* their empires? The tyrants have long since gone to their own place; their names have descended upon the roll of infamy; their empires have passed, like shadows over the rock;

they have successively disappeared, and left not a trace behind.

But what became of the church? She rose from her ashes, fresh in beauty and in might. Celestial glory beamed around her; she dashed down the monumental marble of her foes, and they who hated her, fled before her. She has celebrated the funeral of kings and kingdoms that plotted her destruction; and with the inscriptions of their pride, has transmitted to posterity the record of their shame.

How shall this phenomenon be explained? We are, at the present moment, witnesses of the fact. This blessed book, the book of truth and life, has made our wonder cease. The Lord *her* God, in the midst of her, is mighty. *His* presence is a fountain of health; and *his* protection, a wall of fire. *He* has betrothed her, in eternal covenant, to himself. *Her* living head, in whom she lives, is above; and *his* quickening spirit shall *never* depart from her. Armed with divine virtue, *his* Gospel, secret, silent, unobserved, enters the hearts of men, and sets up an everlasting kingdom. It eludes all the vigilance, and baffles all the power of the adversary. Bars, and bolts, and dungeons, are no obstacle to its approach; bonds, and tortures, and death, cannot extinguish its influence.

Let *no* man's heart tremble then, because of fear. Let *no* man despair in these days of rebuke and blasphemy of the *Christian* cause. The ark is launched indeed, upon the floods; the tempest sweeps along the deep; the billows break over her on every side. But Jehovah Jesus has *promised* to conduct her in safety to the haven of peace. She *cannot* be lost, unless the pilot perish. Why then, do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? Hear, O Zion, the word of thy God, and rejoice for the consolation. No weapon that is formed against *thee* shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the

heritage of the servants of the Lord; and *their* righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The deplorable condition of the *evangelical* clergy in the Anglican church establishment, is borne testimony to by the Christian Observer; the able and uniform advocate for the necessity, the usefulness, the importance of that establishment.

In reviewing the Peterborough questions, and animadverting upon the arbitrary, irresponsible power given to, and exercised by the English bishops, in *ejecting* licensed curates, according to their own sovereign will and pleasure, without deigning to assign any reason for thus depriving a man of his bread, the Christian Observer says: that the case of the established clergy in England, particularly of those who are unbeneficed, is quite an anomaly in a free country. A man of adequate learning, of respectable talents, of irreproachable character, and of orthodox sentiments, after proceeding through the usual academical gradations, may, at the age of twenty-three, when it is *too late* to choose another profession, or to recall the expense and time consumed on his education, be *rejected* as a candidate for holy orders, *merely* because he cannot, in conscience, give the *required* reply to *eighty-seven* questions, the whole scope of which he may see to be *at variance* with the plain meaning of the legally authorized formularies, which he must also sign, and is willing, *ex animo*, to sign, and to abide by.

Now, this difficulty can touch only an *evangelical* candidate; for a *formalist* could swallow, without once straining, not only bishop Marsh's eighty-seven questions, but as many more, in every diocese, in England, Wales, and Ireland; *his* sole object being to obtain as much clerical emolument, with as little clerical labour as possible.

But if the candidate *be* admitted to deacon's orders by *one* bishop, he may still have to encounter *another* bishop's fourscore and seven questions, before he can become a priest. And, when thus fully

ordained, and rendered for ever *legally* incapable of attending to any secular employment, he may be threatened with another eighty-seven questions, by a *third* prelate, before he can obtain a license as a stipendiary curate in his diocese. Or if he procure a license, and minister faithfully in a parish during the greater part of his life, a *fourth* bishop may come, with *his* new code of captious, sophistical, unscriptural questions, and eject him peremptorily, on the mere surmise, that the curate's gorge is not wide enough to swallow them all.

And this may be done without the bishop assigning any reason, or alleging any fault against the individual clerk, whom he casts out to penury and reproach. This is a system of ecclesiastical tyranny, upheld and practised in the protestant established church of England; such as does *not* exist in any other clerical body on earth; not even in that of papal Rome. Nor does *such* a system, we are fain to confess, appear peculiarly calculated to promote piety, and prevent heathenism among the people of Britain.

Until *lately*, a presentation to a benefice was thought to stand upon firmer ground, and that an appeal lay to the courts of law or equity, from a bishop, who refused institution; so that he must either institute the presentee without delay, or show *legal* cause for his refusal. But, from what passed in the house of lords, in the session of 1820, in the case of the Exeter diocesan, Dr. Pelham, and Mr. Jones, it appears, that this right of appeal is undermined; for wherever the testimonials of the presentee are not signed by clergymen of the diocese, in which his intended benefice lies, a bishop's counter-signature is requisite; which counter-signature he may refuse, *without* assigning any reason.

The "Curate's Act," now embodied in the "Consolidation Act," empowers a bishop to proceed "summarily, and without process," subject only to an appeal to the archbishop, who acts in the same

summary manner. This compendious method supersedes all canons, and rubrics, and statutes; and the aggrieved individual is *not* permitted to be heard, or to plead these statutes, rubrics, and canons; or, even to demand *what* is his offence, by *what* law he is condemned, or *what* evidence is brought against him. The bishop may privately state *his own* case to the archbishop, and the whole be settled summarily, without the complainant knowing any thing of the matter, until he learns the result in his own ruin.

Is such an inquisitorial system?—but I forbear; the plain matter of fact statement, that such is the system of ecclesiastical government in the established church of England, can gain no additional force from any human comment.

In the review of Mr. Wilson's two sermons on the late venerable Thomas Scott, the Christian Observer is equally explicit as to the systematic care which is taken to *prevent* the church *patronage* of England from straying into an evangelical channel.

The word *poverty*, says the reviewer, suggests to us a topic, without the notice of which our observations on the history of Mr. Scott would be very incomplete. Suppose the half cultivated inhabitant of some barbarous region to visit the obscure village, in which Mr. Scott consumed a considerable portion of his life, what would be his unbiassed, uninstructed judgment, as to the individual thus consigned to a narrow parsonage and a petty church, and the rustic, scanty congregation, who, from Sabbath to Sabbath, could be collected from the few scattered cottages around him?

Would he not pronounce him to be some obscure, half taught individual, who, by idleness, or ignorance, had shut himself out, at once, from the attainments and the rewards of his profession? Or, that if distinguished for the extent and accuracy of professional attainments, he, by misconduct, or want of personal virtue, had doomed himself to this domestic exile, the perpetual occupation of a spot, almost

inaccessible to the approach of friendship? Or, that the various *governments*, under whose eye this theological exile had long and faithfully laboured, had *fewer* rewards to bestow, than *worthy* claimants of those rewards? that theological learning, and personal piety, and pastoral diligence, were such *mere drugs* in the modern market, as to invest their possessor with *no* peculiar claim to patronage? that thousands of suitors were pressing around them, *each* of whom had fairly earned pre-eminence; *each* of whom carried along with him, as *his* title to preferment,—*not* his skill in political economy,—*not* his dexterity in the sports of the field, or his address in all the mazes of the dance, or the chit-chat of the drawing-room; but a *still more* valuable commentary on Scripture than Mr. Scott's, constructed by the labours and patience of thirty years, and *still more* powerful efforts to defend the outworks, and augment the influence of our common faith?

How would such a wanderer, from distant and barbarous shores, to *the* country of justice, and benevolence, and political purity, and moral wisdom, and orthodox religion, be astonished to hear, that this banished, *half fed* man, neglected, nay, frowned upon by his superiors in church and state, and destined to feed upon the husks, while others were devouring the grain of ecclesiastical produce, was the *best* textuarist in Christendom, and the *only* living original commentator, at any length, on the whole volume of Scripture?

But suppose the barbarian to seek the solution of this phenomenon, and to ask the *cause* of the exclusion of this clergyman from all the rewards and distinctions of his profession; and to learn that his *offence* was, the adhering closely and unequivocally to the formularies of *that* church, of which he was the consecrated champion and advocate; that there being *two* interpretations, of which some of the more mysterious and difficult parts of these formularies admit,—he adopted *that*, almost universally adopted

two hundred years since, but *now* out of favour in certain elevated quarters; that his *only* crime was a guarded, practical, self-denying Calvinism; though, in fact, it was *not* his Calvinism, but his acceptance of the *evangelical* doctrines, not exclusively Calvinistic, but common to *all* pious men of every various Christian denomination, that constituted his chief offence.

Would not our savage justly raise his war-whoop against the conduct of those who acted *thus* towards a man, who had so eminently served the cause of religion and of the church; because he chose to inculcate the doctrines of that church on others, in the *same* sense in which he, *in common* with many of their framers, believed and subscribed them himself?

Yet *such* is precisely the history of Mr. Scott. *If* he would have abjured the principles in which Usher, and Hall, Hopkins, and Hooper, lived and died, he *might* have risen to distinction and emolument in the English church. But because he saw with the eyes of those illustrious men, heard with their ears, and lived in *their* spirit and temper, he was left to find his obscure, and as far as his *governors* were concerned, his cheerless way to the grave, without a single taste of those ecclesiastical bounties, scattered so prodigally, from day to day, on many a *raw* and *unfledged* aspirant to dignity and fortune.

However disagreed on other points, the persons among *us*, says the Christian Observer, who chiefly possess ecclesiastical patronage, appear to *concur* in the plan of endeavouring, by degradation and spare diet, to stint and *starve* men out of the genuine principles of the *Reformation*; an object, in promoting which, the eighty-seven questions of the bishop of Peterborough will be found particularly useful.

The review closes with a remark on the awful trust imposed by the possession of church patronage; and a prayer, that God would direct the English governors in church and state, to a right use of their power of pro-

moting men to ecclesiastical dignity and emolument. But does the Christian Observer seriously expect *any other* than the present direction of the patronage of the Anglican Church, under the existing system; in which working politicians are constantly making secular bishops, who, very naturally, promote formal, and proscribe evangelical clerks? Or does he seriously think, that *such* a system is well calculated, nay, absolutely *necessary* to promote piety, and prevent paganism in the British empire?

I desire to thank God, that in these United States, there is *no* power, civil or ecclesiastical, that *could*, by any possibility, keep down in poverty and obscurity, such a man as Thomas Scott. Nothing short of the iniquity of a national church establishment is competent to the commission of such a crime. If Mr. Scott had attached himself to any one of the evangelical communions in this country, he would have obtained its highest emoluments and honours; because, where the people *choose*, as well as pay, their own clergy, under Providence, a man's piety, talent, learning, and character, conduct him, in the ordinary course of human affairs, to eminence and influence. But in a state church, where the secular government and secular patronage are *all*, and the people *nothing*, ecclesiastical preferment *never can* be directed generally into an evangelical current.

Accordingly, in England, as a necessary consequence of the intimate alliance between church and state, the established clergy are, for the most part, trained up to *their* holy vocation, in the *same* manner as to any secular calling; and generally live, as laymen do, hunting, shooting, card playing, frequenting theatres, dancing at, and conducting, as masters of the ceremonies, balls and assemblies, eating, drinking, cursing, swearing, electioneering, and so forth, according to their means, ability, and inclination; being distinguished from *other* mere worldlings, only by their exterior apparel, and *not* always even by that.

One of these jolly, buckskin, rosy parsons, duly accoutered in jockey cap and hunting jacket, eagerly asked an elderly Obadiah, whom he met, if he had seen the fox, or knew which way he went? "The fox," replied honest broadbrim, "is in a place where thou *never* goest:" where—where is that? rejoined the clerical Nimrod, tell me instantly, that I may find him. To the which old drab-colour answered, "in thy *study*, friend."

Doubtless, there are honourable exceptions to the general rule; doubtless, besides

"These whipping clerks, that drive amain,
Through sermons, services, and dirty roads,"

there are in that vast body of established ecclesiastics, many men of great capacity, intense industry, and extensive learning; and above all, some *evangelical* ministers, who faithfully discharge the high duties of their sacred office; and may the Great Head of the church, *not* the king of England, nor the archbishop of Canterbury, nor the whole hierarchy in the house of Lords assembled, nor the cabinet ministry, seeing that they all seem bent upon any thing, rather than the promotion of evangelism, but the Lord Jesus Christ, in the benignity of his Almighty providence, *augment* the number of those faithful pastors, that *his* flock may be fed, and nourished, and enlarged.

But that the great majority of clergy, under that ecclesiastico-political establishment, where, from the very commencement of the Reformation, in the reign of Henry the eighth, the maxim has been laid down, that the king is *pope* in England, should be *formalists* and worldlings, seems to be a necessary consequence of the unnatural alliance between church and state, and the pernicious system of individual and secular patronage; converting the whole Anglican ecclesiastical establishment into a well organized scheme of political machinery, and ministerial management; instead of being, what it *ought* to be, a church and clergy, dedi-

cated to the service and glory of God; and to promoting the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, by preaching earnestly and continually, to their perishing fellow-sinners, the all important doctrines of repentance, faith, obedience, and love.

Felix, quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum. It would be of incalculable benefit, both to priest and people, if the American-Anglo-Church could be induced to avoid the formal wreck rock of her established mother in England; and incite her own ministers to compose and preach regular series of sermons, on the essential and distinguishing doctrines of revelation. For example,—original sin, human depravity, spiritual, *not* baptismal regeneration, the plenary atonement, justification by faith, the sanctification of the Holy Spirit; and all those peculiar tenets, which every evangelical denomination in the Christian church considers as of vital importance, to be believed, promulgated, and practised.

Such preaching, with the scrupulous avoidance of all controversy, both in and out of the pulpit, in relation to the extreme, debatable points of every systematic creed; and supporting every position advanced, by apt citations from the oracles of God, and from the truly evangelical articles and homilies of the Anglican church; would materially tend to their own spiritual instruction; to the edification of their flocks; to the strengthening and adorning of the church of Christ; to the extension of the borders of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Such preaching *alone*, well seconded by a faithful and vigilant discharge of pastoral duty, *can* give to the American-Anglo-Church a level ground of equality, in numbers, influence, efficiency and power, with those other religious denominations, which proclaim the unsearchable riches of the everlasting Gospel, in purity, zeal, and strength.

To which add, as an essential part of clerical instruction, the continual evangelical exposition of the Holy Scriptures, as the great statute book of Chris-

tianity ; as containing an inspired account of the *church of God*, through all its various dispensations, patriarchal, Jewish and Christian ; in relation to the stupendous scheme of human redemption ; *in subordination* to which, the whole material universe, with all its elements of earth, and air, and flood, and fire, and all its living agencies and movements, was created ; and will be preserved and directed by the hand of Divine Providence, until the consummation of all things ; when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all the beauties and glories of this visible creation will be swept away.

But so long as *formalism* infests the church, and substitutes hebdomadal essays of cold, diluted, semi-pagan, unsanctioned ethics, and a full reliance upon external order, forms, ceremonies, and rites, *in the place* of the essential doctrines of the cross, and earnest, faithful, pastoral visitation ; *so long* will she continue to languish, and decline, and fall fearfully below the level of other Christian denominations. The *only* possible method of restoring her vitality, strength and beauty, is to bring her *back* to the great standards of the Reformation ; to cause her clergy to tread in the footsteps of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Jewel, and of their faithful followers and successors, Hall, Hopkins, Pearson, Usher, Beveridge, and a thousand other bright and burning lights, whose labours illumined the church, and gladdened the hearts of all sincere believers in the mysteries of godliness ; who, being long since dead and mouldering in the silence of the sepulchre, yet speak with most miraculous organ ; and whose works will continue, as a path-way of light, to direct all those who in singleness of heart and in humility, seek the truth in Christ, until the tide of time shall be swallowed up in the ocean of eternity.

Not now to urge the evils of the *collegiate* system, which is still too prevalent in the American-Anglo-Church, and which, almost of necessity, precludes

the appearance of the same preacher in the pulpit, twice in succession, and consequently allows no opportunity of *connected* theological instruction; there are very seldom heard in that church, even where the collegiate, cureless disease does not prevail, any other sort of sermons, save only isolated, detached essays, on single texts. Seldom indeed, are there any regular *series* of sermons on the great vital doctrines of Christianity; as revealed in Holy Writ, as embodied in the articles and homilies of the Anglican Church, and as distinguished from a mere scheme of human ethics. And equally seldom is there any regular exposition of the Word of God: without which, it is *not* easy to discern, how *any* congregation can be built up; nay, even grounded in the knowledge of those things which belong unto their everlasting peace.

Nor is it less difficult to imagine, *how* a preacher will be able to excuse such awful omissions of most important duties, at *that* day, when the Judge of the quick and the dead shall allot to every one his eternal, unchangeable portion. And too seldom is performed regular pastoral duty; that diligent *domestic* inspection of the souls committed to the care of their spiritual shepherds; in the neglect of which duty, *no* church has ever yet thrived in spiritual-mindedness, and holy practice.

The cold, lifeless, formal, unevangelical preaching of the great body of the established English clergy, has long been proverbial to the whole world. Even the most decent of these clerical formalists dole out Sabbatical discourses, dry, methodical, and un-affecting, with a delivery most calmly insipid; so that if the peaceful preacher should perchance peep over the pulpit cushion, which alone he seems to address, he might discover, that his audience had taken refuge in sleep from the monotonous hum of their clerical instructor.

A large portion of the English national clergy do *not* even affect to preach *their own* sermons; they

either transcribe those already in public circulation ; or, what is very common, use those which are printed, *as if* they were manuscripts, with their appropriate blottings and erasures. Such being constantly on sale by the booksellers in London, at the moderate price of less than two dollars a dozen.

This second-hand mode of clerical instruction is *not* new. Mr. Toplady mentions it as existing when he was quite a young man. In a letter, dated February 1775, he says, — in the spring of 1762, a month or two before I took deacon's orders, I was cheapening some books of Osborne, Dr. Johnson's bookselling friend. After that business was over, he took me to the farthest end of his long shop, and in a low voice, said—"Sir, you will soon be ordained ; I suppose you have not laid in a very great stock of sermons, I can supply you with *as many* sets as you please ; all originals, very excellent ; and they will come for a trifle."

My answer was,—I certainly shall never be a customer to you in that way ; for I am of opinion, that the man who cannot, or will not, make his own sermons, is *quite unfit* to wear the gown. How could you think of my buying ready made sermons ? I would much sooner, if I must do one or the other, buy ready made clothes. His answer shocked me :—"nay, young gentleman, do not be surprised at my offering you ready made sermons ; for I assure you, I have sold ready made sermons *to many a bishop*, in my time."

As facts are the most irresistible of all arguments it may be well to adduce a specimen of this mode, of reasoning, in order to show forth the condition of the *evangelical* clergy in the English church establishment, in consequence of the appointment of political, formal bishops by secular governments.

A recent act of parliament, called the consolidation act, passed in the year 1817, and which embodies, and enlarges the principal provisions of the statute of 1796, gives an unlimited, *unresponsible*

power to every English bishop, over the unbeneficed clergy in his diocese. Dr. —, who was made a bishop, because, he had been college tutor to Mr. Pitt, was not slow in availing himself of the despotic authority vested in him by this pernicious act, to crush every spark of established evangelism that might happen to glimmer in his diocese. He has more than once driven the reverend Mr. Bugg out of his diocese, because he refused to believe, nay, completely refuted the *popish* doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

The last time, not long since, this evangelical preacher was driven from Lutterworth; from the very pulpit, where the venerable Wickliff first promulgated these same Scriptural doctrines, so offensive to the pelagian nostrils of *so many* of the modern lords spiritual of the Anglican Church. Mr. Bugg's own pamphlet, written, to be sure, in a style of sufficient irritation, as of one smarting under a sense of flagrant oppression, gives a full account of the treatment which is *now* systematically inflicted on the evangelical portion of the English national clergy; that *little* portion, whose sole crime it is, faithfully to promulgate the protestant doctrines of the Reformation, *as* they are expressed in the public formularies of the Anglican Church.

Another evangelical curate this same ungodly prelate silenced, for going to hear a *dissenting* minister preach; an *unauthorized*, *invalid*, *uncovenanted* preacher. If this be a fundamental, deadly sin, the late eminently pious bishop Horne ought to have been *unfrocked*; for he was in the habit of hearing the methodist preachers hold forth in his own diocese.

Early in the year 1820, this same modern Laud sent the following notice, at the instigation, it is supposed, of a neighbouring diocesan, who hates all evangelism, with as perfect a hatred as Hildebrand himself could do. The notice was addressed to the

reverend Mr. C——, the curate of a living held by the honourable and reverend Dr. Stuart, brother of the earl of Galway, and well known as a faithful evangelical pastor, and visiting missionary in the Canadas; an apostolic minister, who has left all the allurements of birth, and rank, and fortune, and clerical preferment in England, in order to plant the standard of the cross in the Canadian Wilderness.

The bishop's truly episcopal notice to Mr. C. was, in substance, that his *manner* of celebrating divine service gave offence to sober-minded persons, and, therefore, he should cease from preaching in the parish where he now officiated, and should *not* take any other curacy in the diocese; but in consideration of his own extreme poverty, and his numerous family, he might continue in his present curacy until next Lady-day, (March 25th, 1820,) *provided* he would immediately give up his Wednesday evening lecture and prayer meeting.

As soon as it was known that the bishop had sent this peremptory mandamus, all the adult parishioners, male and female, in the parish where Mr. C. officiated, signed and sent to their diocesan a strong memorial, setting forth their decided attachment to their exiled curate, and showing how much the church had prospered under his faithful ministration; and concluding with an earnest petition, that their beloved pastor might not be driven away from them.

This memorial sealed the luckless curate's doom; that the people of the parish which he served were attached to, and prospered under, his ministrations, only quickened the antichristian zeal of B—— palace, and the decree of *positive* suspension was immediately issued. Is there not sufficient ability, with sufficient inclination, in the evangelical portion of the church of England, to rescue this unprotected advocate of Gospel truth, from the persecuting fangs of prelatical formalism? or, must he be driven into the ranks of evangelical dissenterism, where, as the

law *now* stands, no thanks to lord Sidmouth, neither the British government, nor its state bishops, have any power to crush Christianity.

The British government has *not yet* given to its bishops the same uncontrolled power over its incumbent vicars and rectors, as over the unfortunate curates and presentees, in their respective dioceses. If it had, doubtless, the late venerable rector of Aston Sandford, in Buckinghamshire, would, long since, have been expelled from the diocese of Lincoln, for his evangelical sermons, his "Force of Truth," his "Theological Essays," his "Family Bible," and all his other eminent labours in the service of his blessed Lord and Master.

Bishop Tomline would have found it much easier to drive the excellent Thomas Scott out of his church living, than to answer his "Remarks," on what, with characteristic arrogance, the prelate calls "a *Refutation of Calvinism*." It is much easier, says Mr. Scott, to say, that Calvin's attachment to his system was *blind*, than to refute that system. Probably, Calvin spent more *years* in studying the Scriptures, with constant prayer for the promised teachings of the Holy Spirit, than many who exclaim against him and his doctrine, have done *months*, nay, *weeks*. To select passages, in a measure exceptionable, from such copious works as those of Calvin, may *not* be very difficult; but to follow him in his train of argument, from one end to the other, even of one of them, and satisfactorily to answer him, *hic labor, hoc opus est*.

The British government has only to fill *all* its several sees with formal, secular bishops, and give them the same statute power over vicars and rectors, as it has already given over curates and presentees; in other words, to subject the *beneficed* clergy of the establishment, to the same despotism that is exercised over its *unbeneficed* clerks; and it will soon have its state church completely cleansed from every vestige of piety and holiness; will soon reduce that church, for which the saintly Edward laboured, and Cranmer burned,

and the noble army of martyrs died, to the level of the temple of Diana at Ephesus; or the pantheon at Rome; or the pagodal car of the homicidal Juggernaut.

But then the British government must *not* marvel at the rapid growth of dissent; nor at the approach of that hour of retribution, when a Christian people will shake from off their indignant shoulders, like dew drops from a lion's mane, the burden, and the pollution, and the iniquity of a *heathen* church, however intimately connected with, and subservient to, the political movements, schemes, and plans of a secular empire.

Our own American Tomlines, to be sure, owing to an unlucky little clause in the constitution of the United States, can derive *no* power, either from Congress, or from any of the state legislatures, to drive away out of their dioceses, and consign over to nakedness, and hunger, and barren sorrow, and destitution, any misadventured wight in the protestant episcopal church, who may happen to preach the Gospel, in conformity to the doctrines revealed in Holy Writ, and contained in the liturgy, articles, and homilies, which he solemnly subscribed at his ordination.

But what they *can*, they do, *ex animo*, with all their heart, in this labour of love. A celebrated Italian anatomist, of modern times, laments, that "*præ iniquitate temporum*," he is *not* allowed to dissect living men, and, therefore, is obliged to content himself with cutting up live grayhounds and other inferior animals. So *our* Tomlines and Marshes pathetically complain, that, through the iniquity of the times, in this uncivilized republic, they cannot walk *pari passu*, with their thrice worthy brethren in England; but, *as far* as they dare, they openly and avowedly discountenance all approach towards *evangelism*, by endeavouring to heap every species of opprobrium on those who preach the doctrines of *grace*; those doctrines, to establish which, our great protestant re-

formers gave *their* throats to the knife of papal, persecuting, pelagian Rome.

The wisdom and the wit of our American-Anglo-Church formalists are put in constant requisition against the evangelical clergy, and find copious vent in proscribing them as "*canticle* men, Calvinists, methodists, schismatics, enthusiasts, fanatics, presbyterians,"—and a long muster-roll of other appellations, equally damnatory, and equally consistent.

But as the paper quilllets of the brain break no bones, recourse is sometimes had to arguments, more substantial than can be forged in the mere armory of wit. Not very long since, one of the presbyters in the American-Anglo-Church was arraigned before his diocesan convention, for the deadly sin of holding *prayer* meetings in his congregation. An old lay delegate, *not* himself any great dragon of evangelism, but a long-headed, clear-sighted, forecasting politician, perceiving the evil consequences of such an unwise, intemperate, unchristian accusation, put an end to this pitiable chapter of puny, paltry persecution, by observing, that this was the *first* instance in the United States, of a man's being *had up* before a religious body for *praying*.

This is *not* the only instance of the defeat of ecclesiastical oppression in the American churches, by the superior wisdom, and more tolerant disposition of the *lay* delegates.

To all formalists of every age, and either sex, whether clerical or laic, both in these United States and in England, I would recommend the concluding periods of Mr. Scott's "*Remarks*" on Bishop Tomline's "*Refutation*." And now, says the venerable champion of evangelical truth, at the close of this work, I may, perhaps, assume some measure of confidence not unlike what the very title of his lordship's book contains. I am confident, that I have *demonstrated* the doctrines, commonly called Calvinistic, though *not* every tenet of Calvin, to be *those* of our liturgy, articles, and homilies; and of the re-

formers, both before and after Mary's reign, who compiled them; and I call on the opponents of Calvinism to disprove this, if they can, by *fair* quotations, and substantial arguments, for *assertions* must go for nothing. I trust I have also shown them to be the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments.

But before I close, I would drop one hint. If, indeed, the doctrines in question *be* those of our established church, and *its rulers* should, in general, proceed on the plan adopted by some of them; namely, that of *discrediting* as much as they can, the most pious, laborious, and competent clergymen, who hold them. If, when one of these is removed, they make a point of substituting in his place a man of discordant principles: If they discourage, as to *ordination*, the most exemplary, regular, and unexceptionable men, in *all other* things; even if suspected, by reason of their connexions and friendships, of holding these sentiments; and prefer men of *far inferior* talents, learning, and even *moral* character; will they not, with *their own* hands, subvert the establishment?

Could a shrewd dissenter, if admitted as an unsuspected privy counsellor, give them more appropriate advice, in order to accomplish his purpose of gaining an *ascendancy* to the dissenting interest?

They who have been used to hear the *evangelical* doctrines, in which the question, what must I, a *lost* sinner, do to be saved? is constantly asked, and clearly answered; if they attend to it, they will never after *endure* another doctrine, in which this question is *not* answered to their satisfaction. However attached to the establishment, they will, at length, seek at the meeting that instruction which they *cannot* find at church; and though this, at first, be the *only* inducement, yet becoming acquainted with dissenters, and hearing all their objections; having, at the same time, no one at hand to answer them; they will gradually imbibe the *esprit de corps* and per-

haps at length become *more* zealous dissenters than they to whom they join themselves.

Thus, hundreds often become dissenters, simply by the removal of an evangelical clergyman, and the substitution of a formalist in his place ; who has the mortification of officiating in an *almost* empty church ; while his sole relief consists in declaiming against Calvinists and dissenters, which makes the case still worse.

All this would be prevented, if a competent evangelical man were appointed, if *not* as rector, yet as curate, to succeed one of his own sentiments ; and the formalist were more comfortably provided for elsewhere. And unless it be vainly supposed, that *authority* can *crush* the whole party, this would be the more politic conduct.

Again, a young man, who desires the ministry as a good work ; *pro officio*, not *pro beneficio* ; who can, without hesitation, declare, that he thinks himself moved by the Holy Ghost, to take this office upon him, will *never*, finally, give up his object. If *excluded* from the church, what he counts ill usage will weaken his attachment ; his objections to the dissenting cause will proportionally abate ; and he will gradually be led to enter the ministry among the dissenters. And as these things, considering what human nature is at the best, *cannot* but tend to alienate his mind from those who have been unkind to him, and to attach it to those who are kind, the heart having a vast effect on the judgment, it will not be wonderful if, at length, he becomes a *zealous* dissenter, and the champion of the party against the church of England.

Thus, some of the most pious, able, and even *learned* of our young men, having received a university education, in order to be ministers of the establishment, may be thrown into the opposite interest, and spend all their lives, and talents, in a manner unfavourable to *her* predominance in the nation. Our danger, therefore, is more from *within*, than from

without, whatever numbers may suppose; far more, from *our own* negligence and impolicy, than from the machinations of any adversaries.

Mr. Scott is emphatically correct in this statement, that *formalism* is the deadly plague, which, if not stopped, must infallibly destroy the Anglican Church establishment. The resistless proof of this awful fact is inscribed in large and legible characters upon the face of her whole history. From that fatal hour when Laud first carried her over from the truly Scriptural doctrines of her liturgy, articles, and homilies, into *nominal* Arminianism, but real formalism, she declined rapidly; and other denominations gained ground upon her, in spite of her borrowing, with close and bloody imitation of papal Rome, the aid of the *secular* arm; in spite of her persuasive arguments, drawn from the star-chamber and from parliament, in the forms of pillory, scourge, dungeon, and gibbet.

Her declension through so long a period, was portentous of her approaching dissolution, when, in the reign of George the second, a *revival* of religion took place in England; and some evangelical clergymen appeared in the establishment, preaching the great doctrines of the Reformation, from which Laud, like Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had seduced her into the idolatries of Popery, and into the blasphemies of Pelagianism. The blessing of God *has* crowned the labours of these faithful men, who, notwithstanding the efforts of some modern worthy prelatical followers of Laud, to *crush* all evangelism in the church of England, *are* increasing; and *are*, we pray, and hope, the instruments in the hand of Jehovah Jesus, destined to save that venerable church from sinking amidst the ruin and the pollution of formalism.

These evangelical clergy always fill their churches to the overflowing, and other denominations make *no* headway in their parishes; while the formalists enjoy the unenviable privilege of preaching to a

beggarly account of empty pews; and of railing, long and loud, against all dissenters, who, by these profound divines, are *all* stigmatized as *Calvinists*, this being the present fashionable, formal term of reproach against all serious persons, as that of *methodists*, was, a few years since; however varying from each other in faith and doctrine through all the shades of difference, from supralapsarianism, down to the modern threadbare tissue of infidelity and impiety, cloaked in its multiplicity of names, whether Socinianism, or unitarianism, or humanitarianism, or necessarianism, and I know not how many other isms.

The two main, legitimate *ends* of Christian preaching are, the *conversion* of sinners, and the *edification* of saints; *both* of which objects the formalists are so ingenious as to escape altogether. For as they profess to believe in the exploded popish tenet of *baptismal* regeneration, which assumes, that sprinkling a little water into the face of an infant, and making the sign of the cross on its forehead, will wash away *all* sin, and turn a sinner into a saint; according to them, there can be *no* such thing as the *conversion* of sinners by the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost, of which the Scriptures, both in the Old and New Testaments, are so full; and on which all Gospel ministers, of every various denomination, so strenuously insist.

And as for edifying the *saints*, or evangelical professors, formalists neither have, nor desire to have any intercourse or acquaintance with such persons. On the contrary, they are continually reviling and loading them with what they think, the most opprobrious appellations; as fanatics, enthusiasts, schismatics, and so forth. The very term *saints*, is here, as in England, a never failing signal for the sardonic smile of formalism; and that too, from men, whose church calendar is crowded with saints, and whose churches generally bear the baptismal name of some saint, ancient or modern.

So that, what with the labours of the formalists, in endeavouring to steer equally clear of the conversion of sinners, on one hand, and the edification of saints, on the other; far more terrible to them, than were Scylla and Charybdis to the ignorant mariners of old; it is *not* very marvellous, if *their* Sabbatical effusions altogether escape the imputation of awakening sinners from the sleep of death; of convicting the hardened unbeliever; of comforting the afflicted; of strengthening the feeble; of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to the unregenerate millions of a ruined world: of pointing out the road to heaven, and leading the way thither, by a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as God, *their* infinite sacrifice—God, *their* everlasting righteousness—God, *their* all prevailing intercessor.

The *real* cause why the American-Anglo-Church is so *fearfully* in the wake of other denominations, presbyterian, congregational, baptist, and methodist, is to be found in the prevalence of *formalism* in her clergy. The *ostensible* reasons given for this woful inferiority, are, that episcopacy was in bad odour with the American citizens, during and after the revolutionary war; and that its church order is *not* so consonant with the institutions and habits of a republic, as are those of presbyterianism and independency.

But quite sufficient time has now elapsed to quarantine away the infectious taint of *toryism*, which was supposed to hang about episcopacy during the stormy period of the revolution; and episcopalians have shown themselves to be, in word and deed, as good citizens, in every relation, social and public, as the members and professors of any other religious persuasion. And certainly, there is nothing in the genius and spirit of the Christian religion, under *whatever* form of external church order it may be administered, that militates against *any* form of civil society; *provided*, the particular sect adhere faithfully to the pure principles and precepts of the Gospel; and *provided*

also, it be altogether unconnected with the state, or body politic.

No;—these are *not* the reasons why episcopacy halts, *pede claudo*, behind the other Christian sects. Its lameness is owing to the leprosy of formalism, which taints its lifeblood, shrinks its sinews, and corrupts its carcase. Wherever formalism prevails in *any* American church, there is *no* possible demand either for *piety*, or *talent*, or *learning*, in the ministers of that church.

No bounty for *piety*; because formalists proscribe every thing in the shape of evangelism, with as much venom, though, thanks to the law of the land, *not* with so much physical force and power, as ever did the monsters of papal iniquity, in Europe's darkest night of superstition, ignorance, and clerical despotism. No bounty for *talent* or *learning*; because, *independently* of the controlling influence of piety, which *may* be, and often *is* given to the highest talents, and most extensive acquisitions; and *when* given, would prompt its possessor to preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, *in preference* to leading myriads of armed warriors to victory; or to shaking senates with the thunder of eloquence; or to guiding a nation in prosperous triumph through the thorny mazes of intricate policy; because, *independently* of the controlling influence of piety, the provision for clergy of all denominations in this country, is *too moderate*, to induce high talent and extensive learning, to crowd into the clerical calling; when a civil, or military, or naval, or commercial direction of that learning and that talent, would lead to the loftiest public honours, to the acquisition of wealth, influence, authority, power, reputation; *all* that the prince of *this* world has to bestow, upon the votaries of an unregenerate, unsanctified ambition.

Doubtless, in *every* section of the Christian church, where evangelism pervades the pulpit, it will *never* want piety, talent, and learning in its ministers; nor

where these ministerial requisites are present, will there ever lack numbers of people hastening to enroll themselves under the banner of the cross.

The American-Anglo-Church, therefore, *must* remain inferior to other denominations in clerical piety, talent, and learning, *so long* as it continues to make formalism the God of its idolatry; seeing, that formalism hates all evangelical piety with a perfect hatred; darkness having no fellowship with light, nor Belial with Christ; and seeing also, that there is *not* a sufficient bounty to draw great talent and great learning, *without* piety, into the service of the church.

If formalism be so ruinous to the *established* church of England, which has all the aid and influence, that immense revenues, coupled with the protection and patronage of the civil government, can give; how much *à fortiori* must formalism be pernicious to the best interests of the American-Anglo-Church, which only stands on the same level ground of political privilege and right, with every other Christian denomination? Whence the resistless inference, that the protestant episcopalian *never can* equal other communions in piety, talent, learning, and numbers, until her clergy, *generally*, preach the truly evangelical doctrines of their own articles and homilies.

This church *must* be brought back to the great standard doctrines of the Reformation, or she will inevitably decline; *malgré* the assertions and denunciations of her formalists to the contrary. The proof of this fact is so obvious, that he who runs may read; namely, that whenever the protestant episcopal clergy, whether in the United States or in England, preach the Gospel, their churches are crowded; and whenever they preach formalism, they drive all pious people into other denominations; retaining only carnal, careless, secure, unawakened pharisees and worldlings; who occasionally saunter into church, if the weather be good, or they have no other engagement, or it be morning.

One of the slenderest of clerical formalists is reported

to have put on a sufficient quantity of compelled valour to hint this to his meagre congregation. He told them, that they were all very good Christians, and in a fair way for the heavenly kingdom; that they had all been *regularly* baptized, many of them confirmed, and some of them been occasionally at the holy communion; but that most of them seldom, if ever, came to church in the afternoon; which was not quite right, though, to be sure, it was very natural to sit a little longer at table after dinner, on Sunday, and indulge in the innocent recreation of an extra glass of wine; which doubtless would be overlooked by a merciful God, who always accepts *sincere*, though *imperfect* obedience.

How well all this little puling theology, respecting the due observance of the Sabbath, answers to the Scriptural requisitions of Jehovah himself, may be seen by consulting the book of Exodus, or the prophet Isaiah.

But, *quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem, Testa diu*;—perhaps the foul and feculent tide of formalism has run its course so long in the Anglican establishment, that little short of the eighth Harry's arm is requisite to cleanse the Augean stable. What is there in the primitive aspect of the venerable church of England, *apart* and separate from her unnatural union with the state, to discourage or deter Christians from seeking spiritual refuge in her maternal bosom? She came out at the day-dawn of the Reformation, from amidst the darkness and corruption of popery, purified by blood and fire. She has framed a most evangelical standard of faith and doctrine. She has sent forth from her teeming loins the most learned body of clergy the world ever saw, and has diffused light and life over all the habitable globe, by her Bible societies, her missionary institutions, her religious tract associations, and her Sunday schools. And she *can* only fall from her ancient and high estate, by the *formalism* of her priests and peo-

ple, marring her beauty, staining her holiness, quenching her existence.

It is moreover *not* possible for the American-Anglo-Church to possess a body of *able* and *learned* clergy, *until* her formalism be merged in evangelical Christianity; because an unregenerate, unawakened laity, consisting of mere worldlings, are generally satisfied much after the manner of the papists, that their church order, their bishops, priests, and deacons, their baptismal regeneration, their communion, to which *all* are indiscriminately admitted, however profane, or irregular, or profligate may be their lives, will carry them safely through, as a matter of course, without any material trouble on their part, and without much pulpit help. Whence, at their occasional visits to the church, they do *not* pay any very great attention to the performances of the preacher. And where there is *no* demand in the market for talent, or learning, or any other commodity, it will *never* be brought to market.

No valid objection to this position can be drawn from the *fact*, that the Anglican Church establishment is full of formalism, and yet numbers many able and learned clergymen; because, *independently of all piety* that state church offers a sufficient bounty for the attachment to her service, of the highest talents, and the most extensive erudition, in her emoluments, her honours, her influence, her power. The archbishopric of Canterbury is as great a stake for which the secular ambition of an *irreligious* man may throw, as is the lord high chancellorship of England, or the supreme command of the British armies; or the uncontrolled guidance of the vast and complicated political movements of the British empire.

But in these United States *no* such clerical stake exists; the pay of the clergy is too little, and their *political* influence still less, to induce, *where* the incitement of *piety* is wanting, first rate talents, and extraordinary acquisitions, to enlist themselves in the service of the sanctuary.

And what *is* the fact? does the American-Anglo-Church exhibit in *her* clergy an *average* of talent and learning, in any assignable proportion, comparable to the talent and learning displayed by other religious denominations? Where are *her* Edwardses, and Davieses, and Dwights, and a thousand other brightly burning luminaries, that have shed an imperishable lustre upon the presbyterian and congregational persuasions? Where are *her* theological treatises; *her* series of sermons on the great, the distinguishing doctrines of Revelation; *her* Biblical disquisitions? What *has* she hitherto produced? Little, very little, except some mewling, mawkish, miserable controversy about external churchmanship.

It is a deep stain upon the American-Anglo-Church, that she *alone*, of all the compacted religious bodies, has degenerated into extensive formalism. While the presbyterians, of every various shade in doctrine, discipline, and government, have continued, as Calvinists, faithfully preaching the systematic creed contained in their respective confessions; and while the Wesleyan methodists, as Arminians, have preserved the system of Scriptural instruction, handed down to them by their great founder and leader, *too many* of the protestant episcopal clergy have grievously swerved from the high standard of their own evangelical articles, homilies, and liturgy; to which may the great Head of the church bring them back with all convenient speed!

As the case now stands, we are constrained to acknowledge, that the preamble of the preface to the homilies, as published in the year 1562, is still too applicable; it runs thus:—

“Considering how necessary it is, that the Word of God, which is the only food of the soul, and that most excellent light, that we must walk by in this our most dangerous pilgrimage, should, at all convenient times, be *preached* unto the people; that thereby they may both learn their duty towards God, their governors and their neighbours, according to

the mind of the Holy Ghost expressed in the Scriptures; and also to avoid the manifold enormities which heretofore, by *false* doctrine, have crept into the church of God; and how that *all* they which are appointed ministers, have *not* the gift of preaching, sufficiently to instruct the people which is committed to them; whereof great inconveniences might arise, and ignorance still be maintained, if some honest remedy be not *speedily* found and provided."

It is an important consideration, that if the clergy of the American-Anglo-Church, generally, and faithfully, proclaim the evangelical doctrines of their own public formularies, they have it in their power, eventually, to encircle *more* millions of souls within the protestant episcopal communion, than have ever yet reposed within the pale of the Anglican establishment; seeing that, ere long, the American population must fill up the immense territory which stretches from Maine to the Floridas, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean; and seeing also, that the doctrine and discipline of the church of England, when sincerely taught, and wisely administered, have *never yet* failed to gain numerous converts, and to preserve them within her spiritual fold.

With respect to the *burdens* under which the British nation, at present, staggers, and reels to and fro like a drunkard, the question is *not* now, if those burdens be *necessary*; if they be the *unavoidable* price paid for having delivered England, Europe, the universal world, both civilized and savage, from the most horrible and ignominious of all human despotisms? But the imperative question *is*, if the rulers of Britain be not *bound* to endeavour to conciliate the affections of *all* the British population; from whom they annually take full *one-third* of their whole income, one-third of the proceeds of the productive industry and talent of the whole nation?

And then follows another question; is this desirable object to be attained, by keeping at least one-third of the whole British population in a state of continual

exasperation, under a system of religious disabilities, and political proscription; while the best feelings and affections of the remaining two-thirds are incessantly outraged by having a formal state hierarchy, and a formal state clergy, fastened upon them by the studied, systematic *misdirection* of the national church patronage?

That the financial pressure of the British empire is *felt* by her governing statesmen, is evident, from an observation dropped by the earl of Liverpool, in the house of Lords, when lord Holland pressed the administration to require satisfaction from the American government, on account of general Jackson's having put to death Ambrister and Arbuthnot, two British subjects. Lord Liverpool replied, that it was easy for gentlemen in the opposition to clamour for redress; but suppose the republicans refused to listen to the requisition of Great Britain, were the gentlemen of the opposition prepared with the *funds* necessary to carry on a new war? for if they were, his majesty's ministers were *not*.

It seems strange, that the premier of a mighty empire, and a disciple of William Pitt, should have made such an open avowal of veritable weakness. Certain is it, that such puling shrieks of feeble lamentation would *not* have issued from the lips of the great Chatham, or his greater son.

Many respectable jurists in these United States expressed their opinion, that general Jackson's conduct was a violation of international law; and the senate of the United States also, by a committee, reported strongly against his acts. But when lord Liverpool's speech reached this country, the National Intelligencer, the government paper at Washington, republished it, without one word of comment, and every mouth was hushed in relation to general Jackson; but the American people, generally, were much elated at what they deemed the fearful reluctance of Britain to engage in another conflict with this federative republic.

It might be as well to notice, in passing, an idle opinion entertained in Downing-street, that a considerable quantity of *British* feeling still exists among the people of the United States. Now nothing can be more vain, than to expect any European attachments from those who are born upon this immense continent. The chief objects of every native American, after bettering his own condition, are to aggrandize his country; to drive all Europeans out of this western world; to federate the two Americas, north and south, making the United States the head and soul of the great general confederation; and, eventually, to dictate the law to Europe, and to the world.

Doubtless, there is immense wealth in Britain; but it is confined to *comparatively* few hands; the monied and the landed aristocracy, who labour incessantly, by the system of entails and strict settlements, to prevent the general diffusion of property throughout the nation. Hence the great mass of the people are sunk in penury, and consigned to a continual struggle for a scanty subsistence.

There is also an abundance of wealth in these United States; but it is more equally divided. The occupiers of the land are generally *freeholders* of the soil they cultivate; and *not* mere renting farmers as in England, where tithe-tax and rent keep the agriculturists always in straits. The capitals, generally, are moderate, and widely diffused. Few of the native Americans are very poor; and such is the demand for labour, both of the hand and of the head, that *every* industrious person, in any vocation, can command a full share of the necessaries and comforts of life.

In February, in 1822, the earl of Liverpool said, in the house of Lords, that the whole national income of Britain amounts to two hundred and eighteen millions sterling. Of this, the state, the church, and the poor, annually consume at least *one-third*; leaving only two-thirds to maintain the population, and carry onward the productive industry of the empire.

The consequence is, that all the people are put upon short allowance. Even the great personages, men possessing incomes of from five to fifty thousand pounds sterling a year, have voted it to be *unfashionable* to keep carriage horses; by which manœuvre they escape not merely the expense of supporting those animals, together with their due accompaniment of coachmen and grooms, but also the burden of taxation, which is peculiarly heavy upon all these articles.

This fact is, in itself, a conclusive proof of the *universal* pressure in England. Some few years since, it would have been thought an exceeding meanness in the English nobility and gentry *not* to keep their own carriage horses; as much for show and splendour, as for convenience. But the enormous public debt, and the all pervading taxation, compel every order of society in England to economise. It is, however, *want* of patriotism in the overgrown aristocracy thus to shrink from *their* proportion of the national burdens; which, in consequence, fall with accumulated weight upon the lower classes, who are less able to bear them.

The *agricultural* distress of England is too notorious to the whole world, to require a detail of particulars respecting it. But I must be permitted to dwell, for a moment, upon the situation of my own native county, whose localities and recollections must ever be dear to my heart. In the year 1821, Mr. Eyllott gave in evidence, before the committee of the house of Commons, that *he knew*, within the seven preceding years, *fifty* farmers renting altogether twenty-four thousand acres of land, in the little county of Dorset alone, reduced from competence to penury; some being day-labourers, others in the workhouse, and others in gaol for debt. The report of that committee shows the agricultural distress to be general throughout the whole kingdom.

In the great debate upon this subject in the imperial parliament, in February 1822, various schemes

were proposed to alleviate the distress, and much talk was made about over-production, modifying the corn laws, and lending the farmers money on good security. But the *only* means of diminishing the universal pressure upon England, is to lessen the tax, tithe, and rent, which are crushing the whole population to the earth beneath their combined weight.

There is a small sophism running its round through a certain class of politicians in England, namely: that the *amount* of the public debt unpaid, about four thousand millions of dollars, is nothing, because it is due *in* Britain, to British, and not to foreign stockholders. But in consequence of this immense debt, one-third of the whole national income is swallowed up in annual taxation; and is it *no* difference to a man, whether *he himself* spends his own income, to acquire which he has unremittingly toiled, or the government expends it for him? The main incitement to human industry is the hope of using and enjoying its fruits; *not* of seeing them consumed by an expensive, and, *therefore*, an oppressive government.

The aristocracy of England, however, seems to opine otherwise; for it was stated in the house of Commons, last winter, that an English earl, then recently dead, had left in his will 500*l.* a year to his youngest son, *until* the government should give him a larger income. This is, indeed, fastening the younger branches of the aristocratic families as burdens upon the people of England, from whose toil these sinecures are to be wrung. Is it not enough, that the English nobility and gentry enjoy so great a monopoly of the bishoprics and benefices of the state church? but that they must also entail their younger sons as pensioners upon the civil list?

The *wages* of the English peasantry average between six and seven shillings sterling a week; say, a dollar and a half; equal to seventy-eight dollars per annum. But of this the government, for itself and its state church, takes one-third, or twenty-six

dollars, leaving fifty-two dollars for the labourer's yearly maintenance; of which at least twelve dollars are paid for cottage or room-rent, leaving less than one dollar a week to purchase food, clothing, and fuel, for himself, his wife and children.

Their food generally consists of potatoes and tea. The *duty* on tea for the year 1821, amounted to thirty-five millions of dollars, which was adduced in the debate on the agricultural distress, by the ministry, as a proof of the *flourishing* state of the nation; that is to say, old England is in a flourishing condition, because her grown up labouring men are fain to swallow black tea for lack of beer! Animal food is almost entirely out of the question, as making any part of the provender of the English peasantry; nay, even wheaten bread constitutes but a small portion of their aggregate provision. What would our American labourers, who expect animal food for breakfast, for dinner, and for supper, together with some kind of fermented liquor and coffee twice a day, think of such a dietetic regimen, as that to which the great body of the English population is reduced?

The British government has, for some years past, virtually acknowledged its *inability* to employ or to support its home population, by its various schemes and plans for promoting emigration to the Canadas, the Cape of Good Hope, and Botany Bay; with what success must be left to time and the hour to determine.

The *game* laws of England are almost as great a curse upon the nation as the poor laws themselves. They erect every landed gentleman in the country into a petty tyrant on his own domain. If a farmer see a hundred hares, or pheasants, or partridges, eating up his wheat fields, from the produce of which he is expected to pay his rent, tithe, and taxes, he dares *not* touch one of these vermin. And if any poor man wire a hare, or knock down a pheasant or partridge, not with a gun, for it is *unlawful* for the

English people to have any firearms in their possession, he is fined five pounds, and put into gaol for the first offence, and transported to Botany bay for the second.

In March 1822, there were *twenty* men lodged in Dorchester gaol, for this crime of *poaching*. Twenty human beings incarcerated in one little county prison, at the same time, for killing game! During the last winter, it was stated in the house of Commons by a member, that in Bury gaol, in the county of Suffolk, there were confined several labourers, who had poached in the open day, for the purpose of being apprehended; they deeming it a less evil to be immured in prison, where they must be fed, to starving at home, for want of employment, and the means of subsistence.

Why cannot game be considered as private property, *so long* as it remains on the land of any individual; which would prevent a multiplicity of disputes, and abolish a code of feudal oppression? As the case now stands, the numerous army of gamekeepers and poachers continually supply the English markets and taverns with game, fill the prisons with poachers, and confound the whole country with affrays and bloodshed.

England has, surely, quite enough to struggle with, in her enormous load of public debt, her bloody but inefficient penal code, her universal burden of taxation, her severe pressure of excessive rents, and excessive tithes, and her cancerous systems of the game and poor laws, gnawing into her very vitals, without the additional and *still greater* curse of the government persisting to perpetuate, to the utmost extent of its power, the *formalism* of the national church establishment.

In Ireland, things are even much worse. The great body of the people in that country are literally reduced to nakedness and famine, by the united efforts of the tax gatherer, the middle man, and the tithe proctor. Take, for example, the situation of

a single parish in the county of Cork ; *without* one resident landlord, or magistrate, or curate ; *without* one gentleman, protestant or papist ; and *without* a church ; yet the inhabitants are compelled to pay both tithes and church rates.

As a specimen of the manner in which the Irish *tithe* system is carried into execution, it was mentioned in the house of Lords, in February 1822, that in a parish in Tipperary, a tithe proctor charged a farmer *thirty* pounds, when the incumbent clergyman demanded, and actually received, only *eleven* pounds. Lord Liverpool, on this occasion, said, that the British government would investigate the subject of tithes in Ireland ; but he protested stoutly against any attempt to meddle with the tithe system in England ; as it was intended to continue that benediction for the benefit of the English agricultural interest.

In the house of Commons, during a debate on the same subject, it was distinctly admitted by the administration, that neither religion nor politics had *any* share in the existing disturbances of Ireland. Which is true ; for the intolerable pressure of the tithes, the taxes, and the rents, has driven the Irish peasantry into insurrection, as a less evil, notwithstanding the perspective of a contingent gallows, than remaining quietly at home to die a lingering, but certain death, by hunger.

With respect to the *religious disabilities*, under which so large a portion of the British population labours, I cannot do better than refer to the splendid speeches delivered by Mr. Canning in the house of Commons, in the month of April 1822.

In the year 1678, Titus Oates, by a series of the most horrible perjury, induced an English house of Commons to countenance his tale of a popish plot ; for pretended concurrence in which several persons were executed, and among the rest lord viscount Stafford, a popish peer, venerable alike in integrity and age. An act was also passed to exclude popish

peers, in future, from sitting in the house of Lords, where they had regularly sate for one hundred and fifty years subsequent to the Reformation.

This statute of the English parliament, founded in perjury and blood, Mr. Canning moved to repeal; and thereby restore to the popish peers their privilege of sitting as hereditary legislators in the house of lords. The university of Oxford, the great nursing mother of the Anglican Church establishment, presented a petition *against* repealing this iniquitous act, by the hands of her representative, Mr. Peel, the secretary for the home department, and one of the cabinet patrons of the national church.

Mr. Peel *opposed* the repeal of this statute in a speech replete with pitiable sophistry, utterly unworthy of his acknowledged abilities and eloquence. Does the university of Oxford think, that a state church *cannot* be supported, unless she is buttressed up by proscription and penalty? by statutes stained with perjury and murder? What is the *avowed*, the ostensible use of a national church establishment? is it not to make the people religious and moral? And is this done by inflicting pains, and penalties, and political disabilities upon all who differ from her in opinion about the external form and order of ecclesiastical government and discipline? Let the present actual state of religion in the established church answer.

Mr. Canning himself is a stanch church establishment man, and throughout his whole speech, calls the dissenters by the invidious appellation of "*sectaries*:" yet, without once adverting to the subject in a religious point of view, he contends, that it is directly opposed to *sound policy*, for the British government to continue these political disabilities. For himself, said the illustrious orator, he felt little comfort, that, on approaching the table, he was obliged to take *such* oaths, as not only did *not* qualify him the better to become a legislator, but taught him to feel he was giving pain to millions of his fellow-subjects.

As little comfort did he feel, when discussing with papists the duties they owed, and the love they bore the British *constitution*, that the talisman of its beauty was held to be *their* exclusion; and the splendour of all its charms, that *they* were *not* allowed the participation of its blessings. It was *too much* to expect of *any* loyalty, that *depression* and *exclusion* should make it more alive to the condition of a state, in which it gained its votaries and practitioners *no* corresponding reward. It was not to be expected, that you should eye a mine without a wish for gold; that you should exercise an extraordinary forbearance in the midst of *oppression*; that you should rejoice in a constitution, which *denied* you its advantages; that you should expend your blood and treasure in support of a system in which you had *no* participation. It was *not* to be hoped, that the superfluity of enthusiasm and loyalty would be expended in support of that from which they were excluded. Mr. Canning's bill having passed the Commons, was *rejected* by a majority of forty-two, in the house of Lords. *Proh pudor!*

The reasoning of Mr. Canning, so far as the *test* act reaches, applies equally to the protestant dissenters of England, as to the papists of Ireland; making together, at least, *one-third* of the British population, which is *excluded* from office, civil and military, in order to secure an odious monopoly to that very established church, which they are *compelled* to contribute towards supporting, at the very time that it excludes them from all office. It is quite natural for a secular government to consider a national church establishment as a mere political machine, to be directed in entire subservience to state purposes.

But then, what becomes of the position, that a church establishment is *necessary* to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in a nation?

Taking it, however, as a mere political machine, an important question arises; *if it be worth* so large

an annual price of money, and intolerance, and persecution, and irreligion?

Omitting all considerations, drawn from *their own* personal religion, or from any particular views of theology, which they may entertain, and putting the matter simply on the ground of human policy, it is incumbent on the rulers of Britain to pause awhile, ere they finally determine to *persist* in exasperating one-third of the entire home population, by continuing their present system of religious disabilities, and political proscription; and to *persist* also, in alienating the affections of the rest of the people, by labouring incessantly to render the *whole* of the established church of England, formal, secular, and irreligious.

If the tide of popular opinion be once borne in a general current against the English government, that government *cannot* stand. The national burdens imposed upon the people of England are sufficiently heavy to render them impatient, if the conduct of their rulers shakes the confidence of the nation in the sincerity and wisdom of their measures. Every *very* expensive government is, unavoidably, and of necessity, an *oppressive* government; because it continually trenches upon the comforts and conveniences, nay, the very subsistence of the people. Which is emphatically the case of Britain now; and therefore demands from her rulers, measures that may conciliate and soothe, not exasperate and alienate, an oppressed and staggering population.

It is high time for the British government to learn, what the British people pretty generally know, that their state church is not only *not* calculated to promote the cause of pure religion, but that it does not even serve the inferior purpose of preserving a *speculative orthodoxy*. For, from the time of Laud's apostacy to the present hour, the great body of the established clergy have *not* held the doctrines of their church articles, whether construed in a Calvinistic, or an Arminian sense. Indeed, the Peterborough

questions, issued by an English bishop, professedly lay the axe to the root of all evangelism, whether Arminian or Calvinistic.

The great body of the English state clergy have, for ages, taught only a diluted, nominal Christianity; whence, as Mr. Wilberforce truly observes, in his invaluable book, “that unseemly *discordance*, which has too much prevailed between the prayers which precede, and the sermon which follows.”

The great, the *inherent* evil of a church establishment is, that it engenders and *perpetuates* formalism. In *unestablished* churches, formalism merely depletes and diminishes the sect, which can only be revived by its recurrence to evangelical preaching. But the civil government upholds a formal state church, as a mere political machine, when its religion is extinct, until both church and state are overwhelmed in one common ruin.

The evangelism *in* the church of England, which has been the mean, under Providence, of hitherto preserving that church from perdition, is *not* owing to the establishment, whose rulers, both civil and spiritual, are incessantly labouring to crush it out of existence. The British government systematically abstains from making evangelical bishops; and formal bishops invariably discountenance and persecute evangelical clerks. *What* proportion do the evangelical bear to the whole clergy in the Anglican establishment at *this* time? In all probability, *not* two to eleven thousand; not so many, *positively*, as were ejected by Sheldon on the Bartholomew day; and, *relatively*, much fewer, because then the population of England and Wales did not reach *four*, whereas now it exceeds *twelve* millions.

The *increase* of evangelical clergy in the Anglican establishment is studiously stopped, both by the civil government and the hierarchy directing their patronage into a formal channel; and denouncing all evangelism as hostile to church and state. Whence a continual augmentation of dissenters, to the mani-

fest terror of established formalists. The diffusion of education, and the distribution of the Scriptures in England, have created an increased appetite, both for knowledge and religion, among the lower orders of the people; and *neither* of these desires can be answered or satisfied by the general formalism of the national church establishment; whence they must tend to swell the ranks of infidelity, where the thirst for knowledge is unsanctified by religion, or, of dissent, where it is accompanied with seriousness. Both of which events are unfavourable to the extent and duration of the dominion of the establishment.

If the labours of Wesley and Whitfield, and their associates and followers, and at a more recent period, the pen of Mr. Wilberforce, have been honoured instruments in the hand of God, to produce *revivals* of religion in the church of England, these revivals are *not* owing to the establishment, which, *as a state church*, regularly discourages and proscribes them, from the highest hierarch down to the lowest formal stipendiary curate. And, at *this* moment, to *how many* of the higher and middling classes of English churchmen do not Mr. Wilberforce's observations apply with undiminished force and truth?

The fair and natural inference from all this is, that the Anglican Church has *less* religion, and *less* influence, in consequence of being a state church, and therefore secularized and formal, than she would have, if left to herself, to thrive only by her own evangelism, instead of being encumbered by the help of the civil government and lay patronage.

At all events, it is most obvious, that the established church of England *as at present constructed and guided*, very materially diminishes the moral and disposable strength of the British empire; by continually exasperating, because it politically proscribes, a large portion of the talent, wealth, industry, and influence of the nation; by grieving and disheartening the *comparatively* few serious persons within the

pale of her communion, in consequence of devoting her enormous patronage to the service of formalism; and by offering a perpetual bounty for the general irreligion and profligacy of the remainder of the home population of England.

I have *not* forgotten the auspicious increase of evangelism in Britain, during the last five and twenty years; but hail it as the surest pledge of Jehovah's blessing on her; and that *He* will preserve and prosper her as a nation, and make her an instrument in *his* hands, to diffuse the light of everlasting truth to the remotest recesses of the habitable earth. Most cordially do I participate in the feelings of the apostolic William Ward, upon this subject, as expressed in his Farewell Letters.

After an absence, says this truly evangelical missionary, of twenty years from England, it was to be expected, that the great moral changes of so considerable and so remarkable a period; the successful attempts to revive the *unity* and energies of the primitive age, and the formation of so many benevolent institutions; would produce a very strong and delightful impression on the mind of such an exile. I recollect, that as soon as I set my feet on board the *Criterion*, in 1799, on my way to India, to join Mr. Carey and Mr. Thomas, residing there since 1793, I lay down on a seat upon the deck to read the voyage of the *Duff*, then recently published.

The Bible Society, with its auxiliaries, and still more interesting associations; and numerous other institutions, which have entitled the age in which we live, to be denominated the *suttee joog*, the age of truth; did not at that time exist. It was impossible then not to exult in observing, on my return, the *progress* of the kingdom of Christ, in a country endeared by every youthful recollection, and rendered still dearer by absence, *so long* an absence; and by the painful contrast between the land of Bibles, of Christian temples, Christian ministers, and Christian institutions, and a land full of dead idols, heathen tem-

ples, priests, abominable idolatries, and containing *one hundred millions* of idolaters.

When I left England, the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel had *not* been preached, I believe, in the *five established* churches at Derby since the time of the puritans. I was happy, however, to find, on visiting this my native place, in 1819, that *two* of these churches had recently been blessed with clergymen who followed the apostolic rule. 1 Cor. ii. 2.

To find, on my return, in the *establishment*, so many labourers, doing the work of evangelists, and a missionary society, increasing daily the extent and the sacred energy of its operations; to perceive the great increase of *dissenting* and Wesleyan methodist chapels, and the vast additions to their societies; to see the pious members of Christian churches visiting the *benighted* villages, and thus dispersing the last remains of *heathen* darkness in England; to see rising in every part of the country institutions well suited to remove ignorance, profligacy, and misery, the whole of the pious youth in Britain, engaging in these truly Christian efforts; and to recognize, amidst all this increasing ardour, so much Christian liberality and *union*; how could such an exile, surrounded with summer scenery like this, help exclaiming,—is *this* the country of my nativity? Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee.

But these inestimable blessings are *not* owing to the national church establishment of England; for *that* establishment, with an immense majority of its bishops, priests and deacons, have uniformly opposed all these efforts, whether directed to evangelize Britain herself, or the other nations of the earth. *That* established state church has invariably discountenanced the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Church Missionary Society; to say nothing of

its inveterate hostility to all dissenting and methodist efforts in the cause of evangelical truth.

Hence the fact, so degrading to the character of the established church of England, that *she* has done infinitely *less* towards evangelizing the heathen, whether at home or abroad, in Britain or elsewhere, than has been done by the Moravians, the baptists, the methodists, the independents, and the presbyterians.

As a specimen of the light in which the English established clergy generally regard evangelism, take the lucubrations of the Rev. Mr. Polwhele, vicar of Manaccan and St. Anthony, in Cornwall, and a principal writer in the Antijacobin Review; a journal instituted and continued for the express purpose of upholding and strengthening the united interests of the Anglican church and state.

In the year 1820, Mr. Polwhele put forth a new edition of bishop Lavington's "Enthusiasm of methodists and papists compared," with his own introduction, notes, and appendix, in which this *beneficed* clergyman has raked together a loathsome mass of ribaldry, that would disgrace a brothel; and belched forth a volume of blasphemy, that would raise a blush on the cheek even of Hone or Carlile. Yet this chaste, this prudish vicar, is a stout champion of the English church establishment; and shews spasms of horror at the alarming progress of *schism*, in these days of degeneracy and darkness!

Of course, he hates the Wesleyan methodists, with a perfect hatred, because they, generally, as a body, from the time of their great founder to the present hour, have evidenced an evangelical faith and a holy life; nor is he less rancorous against the orthodox dissenters, for whose benefit he intimates that *he* could mend the toleration act, after the fashion of lord Sidmouth's model. But he dips his pen in the doubly distilled venom of the damned, when he raves against the evangelical clergy in the national church establishment.

"Our own Gospel preachers," says he, "are really *greater* enemies to the church, than the *most malign* opposers of her." He constantly reviles them as "gospellers;" and declaims loudly against those very few colleges, in Oxford and Cambridge, "that pay particular attention to the education of Gospel ministers." He solemnly warns the heads of the universities themselves, "to watch over them, and check the slightest tendency in their youth to evangelical irregularities." No caution is given against *unevangelical* irregularities; Mr. Polwhele, doubtless, coinciding in opinion with those *reverend* gentlemen, who expelled Erasmus Middleton and his associates in the year 1768, while they acquitted Mr. Welling; that blasphemy, and bawdry, and drunkenness, are *better* pillars of support to the university of Oxford, and the established church of England, than praying, and singing hymns, and expounding the word of God!

The evangelical clergy, in the Anglican church, who are labouring for the conversion of the Jews, he calls "Judaising gospellers;" and those who are zealously employed in promoting the conversion of the pagans, he calls "Gentile gospellers;" and both parties appear to be equally offensive to this beneficed clerk, and sworn champion of the established church of England.

Contributions to the British and Foreign Bible Society, and its auxiliary institutions, he places upon the same level with theft, and robbery, and rebellion, and murder; denouncing with equal virulence, *Hunt's* female reformers, and those women who collect money for the support of Bible associations. He predicts the most alarming amount of moral turpitude, and of civil convulsion, from the circulation of the Scriptures among the poor. The *education* of the poor also, is stigmatized as a nefarious business. Bell's national schools he cannot tolerate; and, with regard to Lancaster's institutions, he does not entertain "the slightest doubt, that their grand object is to *puritanize* and *revolutionize* the country."

As a consistent advocate for English liberty, Mr. Polwhele lauds to the skies the arbitrary conduct of that brutal tyrant, Henry the eighth. As a conscientious clergyman of a protestant established church, Mr. Polwhele proposes, as a pattern for all future imitation, the execrable, malignant, popish, persecuting Laud. Mr. Polwhele, also, has discovered the deadly peril of *preaching*; for, quoth he, "it was a remarkable saying, founded on the reason of things, that a preaching church *cannot stand*."

Such is the support which evangelism receives from the great body of the clergy of the Anglican church establishment; whether that evangelism be exhibited in preaching the Gospel at home, or in sending missionaries abroad, to proclaim the glad tidings of everlasting life to the unnumbered millions of perishing heathens; or, in distributing the pure word of God, without note or comment, over all the regions of a world that lieth in wickedness, and is bursting in sin and sorrow; or in any other way by which the limits of the Redeemer's kingdom may be extended.

Verily, these formal, high, *exclusive* churchmen are peculiarly qualified to be the firm pillars of a reeling community, and to win the hearts of all the English people, as the heart of one man, to the church, as by law established, and to the civil government of Britain, which upholds that ecclesiastical establishment, which countenances and elevates such clerks!

Is Mr. Polwhele, in due time, to be done into a bishop by the British government, for *his services* to the cause of Christianity, and to take his seat on the episcopal bench, alongside the mitred Tomline, Marsh, and Mant, the three chief established advocates of the pernicious popish doctrines of baptismal regeneration, double justification, and the merit of works?

In fine, notwithstanding the talent, the ingenuity, and the learning, which Mr. Wilks has displayed in

endeavouring to support the main position taken in his valuable work, namely, that a national church establishment *is necessary*, in order to promote piety, and prevent heathenism in a country, we conclude, that the *converse* of this proposition is more consonant with truth and justice, and the universal experience both of the Christian church and of the world at large.

Much ground yet remains to traverse; but the limits of the present volume are waning to their close. Hereafter, if permitted by *health*, which has been interrupted by an indisposition, that, for more than twelve months past, has almost taken away the power of locomotion, and confined the writer, like an oyster, to a single spot, it is intended to glance at the general conduct of the English state clergy, from the latter part of the reign of Charles the second, to the present time; in which will be particularly considered the *causes* and the *consequences* of those *revivals* of religion, which, originating in the instrumentality of Whitfield and the Wesleys, have, at intervals, been occurring ever since, and have invariably received the deadliest *opposition* from a very large majority of the established church of England, including its civil governors, its hierarchs, and its clergy generally.

The importance and the effect of *church order* will be noticed, the Socinian heresy exposed, and the Calvinistic and Arminian controversies, so far, at least, as relates to the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches, examined; in which inquiry Dr. Herbert Marsh's eighty-seven Peterborough questions will *not* be forgotten.

An extended inquiry will likewise be made into the origin and progress of that *formalism* which so much stains and debilitates the different Christian churches; together with some observations on a few of the principal tenets of the present, prevailing, fashionable, formal theology; for example, that there is no *invisible* church of Christ; nothing but a visi-

ble, *external* church; and no church visible, except *their own*; that preaching the Gospel makes *no* part of the public worship of Almighty God in a Christian assembly; that all private meetings for prayer and Christian conference, are irregular, fanatical, and dangerous; that the distribution of the sacred Scriptures alone, without what Bishop Marsh calls the due "*corrective of the evil*," is perilous, and not to be permitted; that sending missionaries to evangelize the heathen, is weak, useless, and foolish, fit only for such enthusiasts as Mr. Polwhele politely terms "*Gentile gossellers*;" and some other modern positions in divinity, alike alien and abhorrent from the word of God, the public formularies of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches, and the confessions of all the protestant reformed communions.

I cannot, however, conclude the present volume, without noticing the *two chief* doctrines of our fashionable modern theology; to wit, the popish dogmas of *exclusive* churchmanship, and *baptismal* regeneration. But I desire it to be distinctly understood, that I have *no personal* controversy with any man, about his religious creed. My *only* aim is to expose certain prevailing theological opinions, which seem to strike at the root of all evangelical truth, and to destroy every inducement to a pure, practical, holy life and conversation.

CHAPTER IV.

Exclusive Churchmanship.

I REPEAT, that I wish to be distinctly understood, as not intending aught personal or disrespectful to any individual, in the following examination of the modern fashionable theological opinions, and therefore shall avoid mentioning names, unless necessary to clear the sense. Far from me, and from my friends, be the sectarian narrowness and bigotry of intermeddling with any one's private and peculiar system of belief; seeing, that the right of private judgment, in matters of religion, is of the very essence of protestantism, as contradistinguished from the proscribing infallibility of the popish scheme.

By the way, the Romanists have a pleasant mode of proving the infallibility of their church. If you ask, is the pope infallible? the answer is, no. Is a cardinal? no. An archbishop? no. A bishop? no. Where then lies the infallibility? In a general council of the church, composed of the bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and pope. So that a collection of many fallibles produces one mighty infallibility; in like manner as a number of noughts, or cyphers, when added together make one great figure in arithmetic.

Let us then briefly glance at some of the leading tenets of modern theology; for the present, briefly, because hereafter it is intended to institute a full inquiry into the doctrines of the various protestant

reformed churches; more especially those of the Anglican Church. And occasion will thence be taken to show *why* the American-Anglo-Church is so fearfully in the wake of other religious denominations; and how the prevalence of *formalism* has kept her down in ignorance and weakness in these United States, as it has depressed her venerable mother in England, where the different dissenting denominations are rapidly gaining ground upon her; so that in 1822, the number of dissenting ministers, of all arms, is about equal to that of the established clergy; namely, eleven thousand each; the church continually declining, and the dissenters constantly increasing.

How many dissenters, think you, would England now contain, if her national clergy, from the Reformation to the present hour, had faithfully preached the Gospel, and diligently discharged their pastoral duties, instead of quenching their own religion, and the religion of their hearers, in the dead sea of formalism, and lighting up the fires of persecution to the fullest extent of their capacity and power, for the edification of all those who sought, conscientiously, to worship the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth?

The doctrine of *exclusive* churchmanship; that is to say, the assumption of all covenant claim to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus being confined to episcopalians; is strenuously avowed by many writers, on both sides of the Atlantic.

This exclusive churchmanship, in sober Christian verity, is a doctrine which may possibly be enforced with the gallows for its sword, and the dungeon for its bottle holder, as in papal Rome, under the benignant auspices of Hildebrand, and, as in England, under the sovereignty of the arbitrary Tudors, and the dominion of the execrable Stuarts. But in these United States, whose political institutions permit to all persons free access to the Bible; and where no one is punished *by law* for believing what God says in his own revealed

word ; very few theologians will be found with a gorge sufficiently capacious to swallow these dirtiest of all the dregs of popery.

Nay, if the day ever arrive, when by parish voting and parish making, or by any other means, the general convention of the American-Anglo-Church shall be induced to pass a canon, declaring exclusive churchmanship to be a fundamental article of the protestant episcopalian creed ; and if, after the example of Pontius Pilate, such a canon were inscribed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin ; still the proof, that this doctrine is either Scriptural, or protestant, or accordant with the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Anglican Church, would be as much wanting as it is now, notwithstanding the council of Trent hath decreed it to be a capital part of Roman catholic faith.

If this doctrine be a fundamental verity, essential to true churchmanship, it is a great pity that Cranmer, and Ridley, and Hooper, and Latimer, and other venerable fathers of the English church, did *not* know the fact ; for if they had, it would have saved them the trouble of being burned ; seeing, that papal Rome always cordially embraces as her children, those who profess belief in this foundation article of her catholic creed ; as may be perceived by consulting the canons enacted by the memorable Tridentine council.

If this tenet be truly Scriptural, those blessed martyrs need not have given their bodies to the popish fires in defence of the protestant faith ; nor need they have cemented the foundations of the Anglican Church with their own life's blood. They had only to avow their faith in the popish dogma, that salvation is exclusively confined to communion within the narrow pale of their own sect, and they would have been found very fit supporters of that orthodox high church woman, the bloody Mary.

It is a pity, that the excellent archbishop Leighton, and the profoundly learned bishop Stillingfleet,

and an innumerable multitude of other bright and burning lights in the episcopal hemisphere, have wanted this essential mark of veritable churchmanship. Peradventure, Stillingfleet and Leighton, not now to mention a thousand other distinguished champions of the Anglican Church, had examined this matter as conscientiously, and had brought to bear upon the subject, as much genuine piety, real talent, and sound learning, as have been mustered upon the same occasion, by any of the modern champions of this popish plea, and yet they shrunk with horror, from the impious insolence of *uncovenanting*, *unchurching* the numberless millions of nonepiscopalians, who have ever breathed upon earth.

It is, indeed, passing strange, that our neoteric doctors, who import their stock in trade of divinity directly from Rome, should be better churchmen than those who, by their piety, talent, learning, integrity, life, and death, founded and established the English protestant church. But it will soon appear that this is *not* the only bale of theological merchandise which has been imported into these United States from the papal mart.

The *argumentum ad modestiam* ought to weigh somewhat with our exclusive divines. The number of American-Anglo clergy do not exceed three hundred, nor their congregations five hundred. Now, it is an ample average to allow five hundred souls to each congregation; especially, if we consider the actual condition of the many lay parishes in the diocese of New-York. There are not then more than two hundred and fifty thousand churchmen in the United States; and these quarter of a million of episcopalians are the *only* covenant people of God out of an American population exceeding ten millions!!!

Verily, this species of covenanting, outcovenants the covenanters themselves, the sturdy partisans of the Scottish solemn league and covenant; and old

Gilfillan and Balfour of Burley must yield the palm to Charles Daubeney and Samuel Wix, and their followers on this side of the water.

The Lord Jesus Christ says: "He that believeth shall be saved." But our theologians clog this gracious provision of the Saviour, by annexing the indispensable condition of a transit through Trinity church. *Utrum horum?*

It is, indeed, high time for all Christians to merge the *jure divino* claims of the various religious denominations, whether episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregational, in the infinitely more important object of converting sinners to God, and qualifying them for heaven.

"Where the Gospel is proclaimed—says a distinguished American divine—communion with the church by the participation of its ordinances, at the hands of the duly authorized priesthood, is the *indispensable condition* of salvation. Great is the guilt, and imminent the danger, of those, who, possessing the means of arriving at the knowledge of the truth, negligently or wilfully continue in a state of separation from the *authorized* ministry of the church, and participate of ordinances administered by an *irregular* and *invalid* authority. Wilfully rending the peace and unity of the church, by a separation from the ministrations of its authorized priesthood; obstinately contemning the means, which God, in his sovereign pleasure, hath prescribed for their salvation, they are guilty of rebellion against their almighty Lawgiver and Judge; they expose themselves to the awful displeasure of that Almighty Jehovah, who will not permit his institutions to be contemned, or his authority violated with impunity."

The same doctrine is repeated again and again, by another distinguished divine of the same school, in his "Vindication" of the American Anglo-Church; and if these two theologians be right, that God has made *no* covenant with any people in the United States, except the two hundred and fifty thousand

bishops, priests, deacons, and laics, so thinly scattered over their surface, wo betide the ten millions of all the other American denominations. For the scheme of *uncovenanted* mercy, cannot help the poor presbyterians, congregationalists, baptists, methodists, or any other nonepiscopalians; simply because *no* such scheme is to be found in the Bible, which, uniformly, represents God, as, *out* of Christ, a consuming fire, and, *in* Christ, as reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses and sins.

The doctrine of these two high churchmen, then, is, that all nonepiscopalians are in the broad road to perdition; their watchword being “episcopacy or damnation;” as if multitudes do not obtain *both* these benefits; and as if such a dogma were not of the very essence of popery!

They, indeed, only follow in the foot-tracks of another reverend gentlemen, who, some years since, when preaching an ordination sermon at St. Paul’s church, in the city of New-York, declared that all ministers, not episcopally ordained, are impostors; their commissions, forgeries; and their sacraments, blasphemy. The preacher, probably, did not know that bishop Prevoost, then the New-York diocesan, had been baptized by Domine Dubois, a clergyman of the Dutch church; and consequently, according to this uncovenanting doctrine, was unregenerated, and not a member of the church.

In reference to this doctrine, one of the greatest divines of the present, or of any former age, observes: “warrant for this sweeping sentence of proscription, from the word of God, none has, or can be produced. To unchurch, with a dash of the pen, all the non-episcopalian denominations under heaven, and cast their members indiscriminately into a condition *worse* than that of the very heathen, is, to say the least of it, a most dreadful excommunication; and, if not clearly enjoined by the authority of God, as criminal as it is dreadful?

“That all those glorious churches, which have flourished in Geneva, Holland, France, Scotland, England, Ireland, since the Reformation; and all which have spread, and are spreading, throughout this vast continent; that those heroes of the truth, who, though they bowed not to the mitre, rescued millions from the man of sin, lighted up the lamp of genuine religion, and left it burning with a pure and steady flame, to the generation following; that all those faithful ministers, and all those private Christians, who, though not of the hierarchy, adorned the doctrine of God, their Saviour, living in faith, dying in faith, scores, hundreds, thousands of them, going away to their Father's house, under the strong consolations of the Holy Ghost, with anticipated heaven in their hearts, and its hallelujahs on their lips; that all, all were without the pale of the visible church, were destitute of covenanted grace, and left the world, without any chance for eternal life, but that unpledged, unpromised mercy, which their accusers charitably hope, may be extended to such as labour under involuntary, or unavoidable error, and this merely because they renounced episcopacy; are positions of such deep-toned horror, as may well make our hair stand up like quills upon the fretful porcupine, and freeze the warm blood at its fountain.”

This sentence has been pronounced upon millions of the dead and the living, merely because they were not, or are not episcopal. For these theologians have declared in substance what their famous Dodwell has declared in form: “that the alone want of communion with the bishop makes persons aliens from God and Christ, and strangers from the covenants of promise, and the commonwealth of Israel.”

But this able and eloquent writer has *not* done full justice to Dodwell. For that honest nonjuror struck an octave higher than his disciples in these United States have yet done. He pushed the popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration so far as to assert, that all infants come into the world without souls;

which are infused into them *only* when a bishop, priest, or deacon, baptizes them, by sprinkling water on the face, and tracing the sign of the cross upon the forehead. All other baptism this strenuous high churchman holds to be null and void; and, consequently, all non-episcopalians, having no souls, can have no claim upon the covenant mercy of God, but are left to death and annihilation, like the beasts that perish.

This doctrine is, perhaps, as absurd, and, certainly, more humane than that of the papists and high-flying formalists, who do, indeed, allow nonepiscopal people to have souls; but, in their great Christian compassion and charity, consign those souls to the bottomless pit, because they lack episcopalian christening and confirmation.

To say sooth, these *uncovenanted* doctors do actually make belief in a bishop *more* essential to salvation than faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In what part of the Scriptures do these gentlemen find, that eternal life is made to hinge upon connexion with *any* particular external church order and government? The transit of an immortal soul from earth to heaven, or to hell, depends upon *far other* grounds, than whether he was an episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregationalist. The word of God says: "he that believeth (in Christ, not in the bishop) and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned." Hence, faith in the Redeeming God is the indispensable condition of salvation; notwithstanding our divines place this condition upon the participation of Christian ordinances at the hands of themselves and their authorized brethren.

What! ho! father Abraham! said Mr. Whitfield, when preaching at Philadelphia—whom have you in heaven? any episcopalians? no. Any presbyterians? no. Any baptists? no. Have you any methodists there? no. Any independents, or covenanters, or burghers, or antiburghers? no. Whom have you then in heaven? cried the impassioned preacher.

We know not any of those names here ; all who are here are Christians—believers in Christ ; men, who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of his testimony. Is this the case ? continued the venerable speaker—then, God help me !—God bless us all to forget party names, and sectarian distinctions, and bigoted differences, and to become Christians, in deed and in truth. Amen ! so may it be, Amen !

This father of the Calvinistic methodists might have added an apostrophe to another distinguished personage, and said : “ Ho ! Beelzebub ! ho ! Satan ! thou prince of darkness, thou destroyer of the souls of men ! are there any papists in hell ? yes. Any protestant episcopalians ? yes. Any independents, or congregationalists ? yes. Any presbyterians ? yes. Any methodists ? yes. Any baptists ? yes. Any *lay* churchmen, teachers, and preachers, and expounders ? yes. Have you any Christians ? no. We have an innumerable multitude of formalists, and bigots, and sectarians, and persecutors of all persuasions and denominations, of every tongue and name, and country, in that region, soil, and clime, where their worm dieth not, and where their fire is never quenched. But we have not one solitary Christian, of any age, or either sex.”

Who can tell the number of souls that have been lulled into the sleep of eternal death, by those teachers who place the *external* order of their church, *at least*, upon a level with the merits of the Redeemer, to procure acceptance before God ? Nay, as to nonepiscopalians, episcopacy is the *first*, and faith in Christ only the *second* requisite ; for, says the writer above cited—“ whoever is in communion with the bishop, the supreme governor of the church upon earth, is in communion with Christ the head of it ; and whoever is not in communion with the bishop, is *thereby* cut off from communion with Christ.”

So then, all nonepiscopalians are incapable of faith in Jesus Christ ; seeing that all communion with

Christ lies through the only open door of communion with the bishop; whence, all nonepiscopalians live and die without faith, and belief in a bishop is *more* essential to salvation than belief in the incarnate God.

But what shall we say, if it appear that this notion of the *jus divinum* of episcopacy is of comparatively recent date, and actually posterior to a similar claim on the part of the presbyterians? The first English reformers, with Cranmer at their head, never dreamed of any such pretension; indeed, they leaned to the Erastian scheme, and appeared to consider the church *merely* as a creature of the state, so far as respected its external order, government, and discipline. Nor was it until some years after Elizabeth's accession to the English throne, that the episcopalians set up this claim, in opposition to a similar pretension advanced by the presbyterians.

In the year 1507, a separate congregation was discovered in London. During the Marian persecution, some protestants abstained from the established popish worship, and met together, as a church, whenever it could be done safely. Finding, on Elizabeth's accession, that the mass of the national clergy were those very men who had conformed to popery under her sister, and assumed to be protestants under herself; some of whom had aided in murdering the martyrs; and that those who desired a more complete reformation were suspended and persecuted, they abstained from communion with the establishment, and still worshipped as a separate body.

A hundred persons were detected, *flagrante delicto*, in the very act of worshipping God, in the Plumbers' hall; of whom ten being brought before the bishop of London, were severely reprimanded. Cartwright presented to the parliament a petition for further reformation; which produced a controversy between him and Whitgift, that resulted in carrying Whitgift to Lambeth, and Cartwright into exile.

The puritans, goaded by the tyranny, alike impolitic and iniquitous, of Elizabeth and her bishops, at length resolved to separate from the public churches, and worship God according to their consciences, in private houses, or elsewhere. They formed a *presbytery* at Wandsworth, near London, composed of several ministers and gentlemen. At first, they objected only to the popish habits of the clergy, and to certain parts of the liturgy; then they proceeded to condemn the whole system of the hierarchy; and finally made the discovery that the presbyterian form of church government and discipline was of divine institution and origin.

Whereupon the churchmen, not willing to yield the palm of precedency to dissenters, put on their spectacles, and began to discern, that episcopacy was not merely a child of the state, but an ordinance of God, derived from apostolic usage. The impious inference, however, that communion with the bishop is communion with Christ, and separation from the bishop is separation from Christ, was not imported from the Roman into the Anglican Church until a period much posterior to the first discovery of the *jus divinum* of episcopacy.

Some grave and momentous questions were, many years since, put to our theologians in relation to this subject. But, even unto this day, these questions have received no satisfactory answer.

These two divines were called upon to show, that there is *more* of the truth and efficacy of the Gospel in their church than in all other connexions, since they deny all communion with Christ to nonepiscopalians. The questions run thus: "will you accompany us from temple to temple, from pulpit to pulpit, from house to house, from closet to closet, and agree, that in proportion as there is little or much of pure and undefiled religion in them, their rank in the scale of Christian churches shall be high or low?"

"In the church, which boasts of the *only* valid ministrations, and the exclusive prerogative of being

in covenant with God, is there more evangelical preaching; more of Christ crucified; more plain, close, decisive dealing with the consciences of men, upon the things which belong to their peace, than in many of the churches which she affects to despise? Are her authorized priesthood more scrupulous about the preservation of pure communion; do they object more strongly to the admission of mere men of the world; and are they more active in excluding from their fellowship the openly irreligious? Do they adopt more prompt and vigorous measures to expel from their pulpits doctrine which flies in the face of their avowed principles, and is acknowledged by themselves to be subversive of the Christian system?

“In this primitive, apostolic church, are the sheep of Christ, and his lambs, more plentifully fed with the bread of God, which came down from heaven? Has she less to attract the thoughtless gay, and more to allure those who become seriously concerned about their eternal salvation, than is to be found in hundreds of churches, which she virtually delivers to Satan? We demand the evidence of their exclusive fellowship with the Redeemer; we insist upon their showing, according to his word, the superiority of their *practical* religion, both in quantity and quality.”

And well might such a demand be made; for if there be *not* more piety within than without the church, of *what* profit is the church to the souls of men? If the American-Anglo-Church be not thoroughly evangelical, the whole population of the United States is in a very fearful condition; because all out of that church, according to this clerical theory, have *no* claim whatever to eternal salvation. They are all thrust out of the pale of the visible church of Christ; are all left to the uncovenanted mercy of God; have no access to redemption by the blood of the cross; however entire may be their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as God their righteousness and God their strength; however pure and holy may be their morals, flowing from, and evidencing

their faith; however zealous, constant and effectual in the conversion of their perishing fellow-sinners to God, may be their preaching, and proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to a lost and ruined world.

Such presumption and arrogance would be ridiculous, were it not truly lacrymable, that any one single, individual protestant can be found in the nineteenth century, so foolishly fanatic, so basely bigoted, so unchristian, so antichristian as to advance this rankest of all the dogmas of popery. And these men, who thus liberally uncovenant, unchurch, unchristianize all other denominations, call themselves Arminians; and profess to believe, that the Saviour died for all mankind, including heathens and Mahometans, as well as Christians; and certainly, the warriors of the crescent, and the worshippers of the innumerable pagan deities, are quite as sturdy *nonepiscopalians*, as the presbyterians, or congregationalists, or baptists can possibly be.

To countervail the high authority above adduced, take the following extract from archbishop Wake's letter to Le Clerc, in which that distinguished prelate does not scruple to denominate *maniacs*, all those who presume to unchurch and uncovenant nonepiscopal protestants. Listen to the great scourge of popery, and see, if he countenances this peculiar doctrine of our modern fashionable theologians.

“Ecclesias reformatas, etsi in aliquibus a nostrâ Anglicanâ dissentientes, libenter amplector. Optarem equidem regimen episcopale bene temperatum, et ab omni injustâ dominatione sejunctum, quale apud nos obtinet, et, si quid ego in his rebus sapiam, ab ipso Apostolorum ævo in ecclesiâ receptum fuerit, et ab iis omnibus retentum fuisset; nec despero quin aliquando restitutum, si non ipse videam, at posteri videbunt. Interim absit, ut ego tam ferrei pectoris sim, ut ob ejus defectum, (sic mihi absque omni invidia appellare liceat) aliquas earum a communione nostrâ abscindendas credam; aut cum quibusdam

furiosis inter nos scriptoribus, eas nulla vera ac valida sacramenta habere, adeoque vix Christianos esse pronuntiem. Unionem arctiorem inter omnes reformatos procurare quovis pretio vellem."

I willingly embrace the reformed churches, although dissenting, in some respects, from our church of England. I could, indeed, wish, that a well tempered episcopal regimen, without any unjust domination, such as obtains among us, and if I have any skill in these matters, such as hath been received in the church from the apostolic age, were retained by them all; nor do I despair, but that it will some time be restored; if I may not, posterity will see it. In the mean while, God forbid that I should be so *iron-hearted*, as on account of such a defect, (permit me so to call it without offence,) to believe that some of them should be cut off from our communion, or with certain *maniac* writers among us, to pronounce, that they have no true and valid sacraments; and thus are, themselves, scarcely Christians. I would purchase, *at any price*, a more intimate union among all the reformed.

If ever the hope of the good archbishop be realized, that episcopacy will be universal, it requires no spirit of prophecy to predict, that its universality will *not* be forwarded by the efforts of those men, who preach up their own exclusive claim to covenant mercy, and consign all other denominations to the bottomless pit.

The Rev. Samuel Wix, in his recent proposal for a reunion of the Roman and Anglican Churches, for the avowed very laudable purpose of destroying the British and Foreign Bible Society, and exterminating all protestant nonepiscopalians, represents archbishop Wake as a champion of exclusive churchmanship, and as preferring papists to protestant dissenters. Whereas, that able and learned primate entertained a wholesome abhorrence of all compromise with any popish communion, whether Gallican

or Roman; and also held a charitable and devotional union with protestant dissenters to be a Christian duty.

The English metropolitan's notions respecting a union between the Anglican and Gallican Churches, are detailed at length in Maclaine's Mosheim; and the duty of conciliating protestant nonepiscopalians is urged in the archbishop's sermons, one of which is devoted exclusively to exhorting mutual charity and union among protestants.

In this sermon archbishop Wake insists, that the departure of English dissenters from the church of England is merely in matters of *indifference*; that the papists alone hold opinions irreconcilable with the unity and charity desirable amongst Christians; that this union and charity, if ever attained, must be sought by a direct toleration and mutual concession among the protestant denominations, in the points about which they differ; and that this Christian union and harmony, not only may, but will be effected among the various protestant persuasions, in the due course of time.

He expressly says, "for us, whom it hath pleased God, by delivering us from the errors and superstitions of the church of Rome, to unite together in the common name of protestant reformed Christians, were we but as heartily to labour after peace, as we are all of us very highly exhorted to it; I cannot see why we, who are so happily joined together in a common profession of the same faith, at least, I am sure, in all the necessary points of it, and I hope, amidst all our lesser differences, in a common love and charity to one another, should not also be united in the same common worship of God too.

"This makes the difference between those errors for which we separate from the church of Rome, and those controversies which sometimes arise among protestants themselves. The former are in matters of the greatest consequence, such as tend directly

to overthrow the integrity of faith and the purity of our worship; and, therefore, such as are in their own nature destructive of the very essentials of Christianity. Whereas our differences do not at all concern the foundations, either of faith or worship, and are therefore such in which good men, if they be otherwise diligent and sincere in their inquiry, may differ without any prejudice to themselves, or any just reflection upon the truth of their common profession."

Indeed, the main object of this admirable sermon is, to expose the essential characteristic of a false and anti-christian religion, namely: the desire of *unchurching* and excommunicating those who differ from its professors in points *not* fundamental, as church order and government, rites, ceremonies, and all the exterior of public worship.

The late Rev. Dr. Bowden, by far the ablest and most learned advocate for the episcopal order, that has yet risen in the United States, with a liberality and catholic spirit, well becoming a Christian minister, expressly avows that he neither unchurches, nor excludes nonepiscopalians from salvation. In his letters on "the apostolic origin of episcopacy," he says: "it is no part of my creed, that a man cannot be saved who is not an episcopalian. I am not endeavouring to unchurch other denominations.

"Here, a difference takes place among episcopalians; and we may reasonably expect that it would; for the Scripture has said nothing about the consequences of the opinion (the divine right of episcopacy) I am maintaining. What the essence of a church is, neither presbyterians nor episcopalians have as yet determined. Upon the question, what defect unchurches, unanimity is not to be looked for. Some presbyterians say, the want of a ministry unchurches; others say, it does not. Some of them say, that lay baptism is invalid; others say, no. Some unchurch independents and quakers, and some other denominations. Other presbyterians do not.

“ When you shall have the good fortune to agree among yourselves, what is the precise point at which a church loses that character, perhaps your discoveries will lead episcopalians to unanimity; till then, we shall not be agreed, whether the divine right of episcopacy necessarily involves the consequence, that denominations which have not bishops, when it proceeds from necessity, want a valid ministry; and whether again the want of such a ministry completely unchurches. Bishop Hall maintained episcopacy upon the ground of divine right, and yet he did *not* think episcopacy absolutely essential to the being of a church.

“ There are two principal divisions of episcopalians. One division believe that episcopacy is of divine right, in that strict sense, that there can be *no* valid administration without it. At the same time, they do *not* entertain the most distant thought that the want of it will preclude men from salvation, when it proceeds from necessity, or from honest error. They believe that such error will be forgiven, and sincere piety accepted in all, who profess the faith of Christ. They think, that if episcopacy be a divine institution, and there can be no church without a ministry, the inevitable consequence is, that episcopacy is *essential* to the visible church. But they say, when the heart is right, that grace, which is not promised to unauthorized administrations, is granted by special favour, so that none will fail of salvation, when the error is not wilful, or when necessity excludes men from episcopal administrations.

“ The other class of episcopalians, although they believe episcopacy to have been instituted by the apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, yet do not consider it as essential to the being of a church. Presbyterian churches, they consider as defective, but not deprived of their church character; as excusable, when episcopacy cannot be had; as irregular and unscriptural in their ministry, but

by no means devoid of a valid ministry. They do *not* unchurch dissenters from episcopacy; they do *not* place them under uncovenanted mercy; they have the *same* channels of grace open to them that episcopalians have, and consequently, may be *as good*, or *better* than they, if placed in a more favourable situation."

Thus, Dr. Bowden draws the line of distinction between the apostolic succession of episcopacy, and the unchurching, uncovenanting all nonepiscopal denominations. Not so the full-fledged formalist; with him, the church is all, and Christ nothing; with him, belief in a bishop is infinitely more momentous than faith in the Son of God.

Let it not be deemed uncharitable to surmise the possibility of some of the fiercest of these exclusive formalists, being doomed to lie howling in the midst of their own church privileges and self-righteousness, while many of those, whom they so charitably uncovenant, may be ministering angels to that Lord of glory, on whose all-sufficient sacrifice alone they suspended their hope of eternal salvation. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you, yourselves, thrust out. And they shall come from the east and from the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

Liberal-minded men, indeed, are not prone to cherish such a pernicious spirit; but seize every opportunity of protesting against this unchristian bigotry. Mr. Toplady, in his "Church of England Vindicated," says: "nor does it follow that the church of England, in believing for herself the necessity of episcopal ordination, does thereby unchurch those of the reformed churches abroad, which have no bishops, any more than that those churches unchurch us for retaining our excellent and primitive mode of ecclesiastical government. National churches that are independent on each other, have, respectively,

an internal right to establish such forms of regimen as to them seem most scriptural and expedient. And this indefeasible right may pass into execution, without any violation of that Christian charity, and neighbourly affection, which ought to subsist between churches that agree in the common faith of the Gospel."

And Mr. Gisborne, in his "Duties of Men," says: "it is now admitted by the generality of protestants, that *no* command was delivered, either by Christ, or by his apostles, assigning to the Christian church any specific, unalterable form of government; but, that while various offices, suited to the situation and exigencies of the new converts, were instituted at the beginning, some of which, as that of deaconesses, have long fallen into disuse, Christians were left at liberty to adopt in future times such modes of ecclesiastical administration and discipline, as they should deem most eligible, in the circumstances under which they should find themselves placed."

Mr. Gisborne then proceeds, following the example of Hooker, in his "Ecclesiastical Polity," to show, that the distinction of orders in the church is well fitted to the gradations of rank in the civil government of England.

But how do our deep divines establish their position, that nonepiscopalians have *no* covenant claim to salvation, seeing that they do *not* pretend to adduce one syllable from the Scriptures in support of their theory? If it appear from the Bible, that God *has* promised eternal life to those who believe in Christ, without putting in any clause of exception against nonepiscopalians, then they *have* a claim upon covenant mercy. And if the Bible contains such a clogged promise, confining salvation exclusively to the episcopal channel, by *what* authority do our theologues undertake to assert, that *any* nonepiscopalian *can* escape damnation, since the Scriptures say nothing about uncovenanted mercy? and they both assert, that communion with the episcopal

priesthood is an indispensable condition of salvation.

One of these theologians iterates, and reiterates, his candid conviction, that all in communion with the episcopal church are in covenant with God; and that *all others* are *aliens* from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, and have no hope but in the *uncovenanted* mercy of God. He then proceeds to charge the presbyterians with entertaining a similar opinion, with excluding from the Christian covenant all, save presbyterians; and pronouncing all, who do not embrace the rigid peculiarities of Calvinism, to be in an unregenerate state, and left to *uncovenanted* mercy.

I believe, it would not be easy to find any Calvinistic presbyterian *so very* ignorant of the Bible, as ever to speak about *uncovenanted* mercy, so entirely unacquainted with the Gospel plan of redemption, as to dream of any mercy, *other* than what is promised by the covenant of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. The truth is, Calvinistic presbyterians profess to believe that, by the covenant of grace, salvation is promised to *all* who really repent of sin, and sincerely believe in Christ, as the great propitiation for sin, to *whatever* church they may belong; nay, although they bear *no* relation to *any* visible church.

Not that they consider church fellowship as unimportant; for they strongly enforce its duty, and loudly proclaim its benefits; but they do *not* confound the external means of religion with its intrinsic essence. They hold the Scriptural, catholic, Christian doctrine, that all who really believe in, and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and evidence their faith and love by a holy life; whatever mistakes they may commit, with respect to external church order and government, nay, if they be so situated, as to be unconnected with any ecclesiastical body; *are* in covenant with God, and possess that title to eternal life, which God has promised to every sincere believer.

We may die—says John Wesley, who was an evangelical Arminian, and consequently, a charitable Christian—without the knowledge of many truths, and yet be carried into Abraham's bosom; but if we die without *love*, what will knowledge avail? Just as much as it avails the devil and his angels. I will not quarrel with you about *any* opinion; only see that your heart be right towards God; that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ; that you love your neighbour, and walk as your master walked; and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions; I am weary to hear them; my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion; give me an humble, gentle lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good faith; without partiality, and without hypocrisy; a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, wheresoever they are, and whatsoever opinion they are of. Whosoever thus doth the will of my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my mother, and sister, and brother.

This benignant disposition led him to judge kindly of all Christian denominations; and he believed, that *heathens*, who did their duty according to their knowledge, were capable of eternal life; nay, even that a communion with the spiritual world had, sometimes, been vouchsafed to them; for example, to Socrates, and Marcus Antoninus; which last heathen, by the by, was a horrible persecutor of the Christians, from whom he, however, condescended to borrow his moral sentiments and sentences. Such men, Mr. Wesley supposed, together with other pagans, belonged to those many, who shall come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, while the children of the kingdom, nominal Christians, *formalists*, are shut out.

The *uncovenanting* divines very generally proclaim themselves to be stanch Arminians; whereas, in fact, they have no more acquaintance with James

Van Armin, than with John Calvin. Their chief claim to the title of Arminian, being an incessant abuse of Calvinism; which they revile with about the same rancour, that the Socinian assails the doctrine of the atonement, and the deist attacks Revelation.

But Calvin and Arminius differ only as to the five debatable points; a belief in which no reasonable Calvinist considers as essential to salvation; no more than any sane, sensible churchman, any one not belonging to the *furiosi* of archbishop Wake, deems belief in episcopacy to be an indispensable condition of salvation. Both Arminius and Calvin agree in believing the evangelical doctrines of original sin, and human depravity; of spiritual, *not* baptismal, regeneration; and of justification by faith.

Now, exclusive formalists, whatever they may profess in general terms, do *not* really hold any one of these evangelical tenets. For, in their opinion, the taint of original sin is so very slight, that it can be washed clean off by a little water sprinkled on the face of an infant, provided the sprinkling be performed by a bishop, priest, or deacon; seeing that, according to their great exemplar, bishop Mant, “*no other conversion than baptismal regeneration is possible in this world.*”

Thus, are two of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity diluted into nothing; and, in the same hands, justification by faith shares a similar fate. For, with the aid of their “terms and conditions of salvation,” they, altogether, explode free redemption by grace, or sovereign favour; and, actually, represent a guilty, condemned sinner, as entering into independent, mutual, running covenants, with an offended God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and transgression, and sin, in whose sight the angels are charged with folly, and the heavens are pronounced to be unclean. These men undertake to perform *their* part of the special contract, if Jehovah will fulfil *his* part of the assumpsit.

This is, to say the least, very vicious pleading ; and certainly, Arminius steers as clear of all such folly and blasphemy, as does Calvin himself. Towards the close of the first, and in the beginning of the second volumes of "The Washington Theological Repertory," a work of excellent augury to the best interests of the American-Anglo-Church, seeing that it is devoted to the dissemination of Scriptural truth and evangelical doctrine, the all important subject of justification is discussed. In the twelfth number, the following summary, deduced from the preceding facts and reasoning, is presented to the consideration of the Christian reader.

"Such are the views of the doctrine of justification, (by faith) as entertained by the reformers and luminaries of our church ; such, also, is the view entertained by Arminius himself, who, in Thesis 48, de justificatione, says—"justificatio est actio Dei judicis, justa et gratiosa, quâ de throno gratiæ, et misericordiæ, hominem peccatorem, sed fidelem, propter Christum, Christique obedientiam, et justitiam, a peccatis absolvit, et justum censet, ad justificati salutem, et justitiæ, gratiæque æternæ gloriam." Such is the doctrine of our articles, our liturgy, and homilies ; and above all, such is the unequivocal doctrine of holy Scripture. By grace are we saved, through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast.

"The doctrine of justification by faith is termed by Luther, the distinguishing characteristic of a rising or falling church. It forms one of the most important points of distinction between the Roman and the reformed churches ; the doctrine of justification by works, is the doctrine of the Romish church ; and it will always be the popular doctrine, says Buchanan, among Christians who have little true religion, by whatever denomination they may be called. For it is the doctrine of the world ; it is found where the name of Christ is not known ; and it is the spirit of every false religion and superstition upon earth."

The writer of this instructive article in the *Repertory*, has proved, by abundant citations from their writings, that the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith, was held by Cranmer, and Latimer, and other of our venerable reformers, who sealed with their own blood, their testimony to the truth of God. And large extracts are also made from Hooker, showing his unshaken belief in the same doctrine. That very Hooker, to whose "*Ecclesiastical Polity*" the formalists perpetually refer for proof of the apostolic origin of episcopacy; but respecting whose truly evangelical sermons, they all observe a sepulchral silence; probably because they do *not* lie within the range of their theological studies.

Such is the substance of formal theology; if, indeed, formalists can be said to preach *any* doctrine; for, in general, these divines take a text, no matter what, and flourish away about fifteen or twenty minutes on the importance of some *overt* act of duty, and the necessity of abstaining from the external commission of some of the grosser sins, without ever once themselves dreaming, much less directing others, *how*, and by what aid, a sinner, whose carnal heart is enmity against God, is *to do* the will of Jehovah. For any purpose of Christian instruction, such ministers might as well select a sentence from the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus, or the *Morals* of Seneca, or Tully's *Offices*, on which to dole forth their diluted, thin sabbatical ethics.

In good truth, these men have *no* system of theology whatever; and so far as relates to evangelical doctrine, the Bible is, to them, as much a volume closed, and a fountain sealed, as the Koran, or the Talmud, or the Shastrus. They set themselves with most particular stoutness against all conversions of individuals, and all revivals of religion, which they, invariably, stigmatize as mere *madness*.

This compendious method of reasoning, is in very general requisition, among formal men and women,

whenever superior zeal, and mightier energy disturb the stagnant drowsiness of the surrounding community. When George the second had determined to send Wolfe to Quebec, his courtiers suggested that there were many older generals, who ought to take precedence of Wolfe in this military expedition. The king answered, "Wolfe shall go." The courtiers then intimated, that Wolfe was not so regularly bred as some other of his majesty's generals. The monarch still insisted that Wolfe should take the command. A noble lord then declared, it would never do to send Wolfe, for he was *mad*. "Mad! is he?" cried the royal veteran,—“then I wish he would *bite* my other generals.”

Quite recently, a worthy Connecticut episcopal, exclusive church parson, was delivered of a small, stillborn pamphlet against conversions and revivals, which he reprobated under the veritable New-England appellation of "*Stirs*."

Those divines, who make *discipline*, instead of *doctrine*, the essence of a church, not only unchurch all denominations, except their own, but break down every bulwark of sound doctrine in their own persuasion. For example, episcopacy is the essence of a church, and the only criterion of a true church; and therefore, the Greek is a true church, although she is heterodox, as to the procession of the Holy Spirit. And the Roman is a true church, notwithstanding her numerous schisms, her persecutions, her idolatry, and her blasphemies.

According to this scheme of exclusive churchmanship, also, if the Anglican, and American-Anglo-Churches were to lapse into Socinianism, they would still be true churches; and communion with a Socinian bishop would be communion with Christ, and separation from a Socinian bishop would be separation from Christ, although that same Socinian bishop denies the divinity and the atonement of Christ; denies all that is essential to, and characteristic of, the stupendous plan of Christian redemption.

Such was *not* the teaching of the Reformers, and greatest luminaries of the English church. They always deemed *doctrine*, not discipline, to be the essence of a church. For instance, bishop Hall says: "Blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential matter betwixt the church of England and her sisters of the Reformation. The only difference is in the form of outward administration; wherein, also, we are so far agreed, as that we all profess this form *not* to be essential to the being of a church, though much importing the well or better being of it, according to our several apprehensions thereof; and that we do all retain a reverent and loving opinion of each other, in our own several ways, not seeing any reason, why *so poor* a diversity should work any alienation of affection in us, one towards another."

And bishop Andrews says: "though episcopal government be of divine institution, yet it is *not* so absolutely necessary as that there can be no church, nor sacraments, nor salvation without it. He is blind, that sees not many churches flourishing *without* it; and he must have a heart as hard as iron, that will deny them salvation."

Cranmer, Hooker, Jewel, Whitgift, and other great fathers of the Anglican Church, always consider pure, evangelical doctrine to be the essential characteristic of a true church, the members of which include "the blessed company of all faithful people:" a phraseology *not* confined by them to mere episcopalians, but comprehending all "that congregation of faithful and holy men who shall be saved."

This opinion of the English reformers implies the distinction between the *visible* and *invisible* church, a doctrine denied by exclusive formalists, who assert, that nothing but a visible church exists upon earth, and that no church is visible, save their own. The great lights of the English church, however, do not leave such an important distinction to impli-

cation; for it is strongly expressed by Cranmer, Jewel, Hooker, Whitgift, Pearson, and other eminent divines.

The best theologians of the Anglican Church have always held, that any part of the visible church would cease to belong to the church of Christ, as soon as it had thoroughly corrupted the purity of the word of God, and the doctrine of the sacraments, notwithstanding the episcopal form of discipline or government, might remain. The homily for Whitsunday says: "the true church is an universal congregation, or fellowship of God's faithful and elect people, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being a head corner stone. And it hath always three notes or marks, whereby it is known; pure and sound doctrine, the sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution, and the right use of ecclesiastical discipline."

But how does this definition of a true church, given by the reformers themselves, accord with the following formal exposition? "The characteristic mark, which distinguishes any society, is its appropriate government. The appropriate government of the visible church is that episcopal form originally established by the apostles. Where that form of government is to be found, there the church of Christ, as a visible society, exists."

One of our highest church divines emphatically warns his clerical brethren not to mistake the present age of religious indifference for what it has been, popularly, but erroneously, called, the age of liberality.

The present, then, is an age of religious *indifference*. The greatest divines in Christendom, men of the deepest piety, the most exalted talents, the most comprehensive learning, the most unwearied and most effectual activity in the service of their Redeemer, have all hailed the present age, as peculiarly blessed by an outpouring of the spirit from on high, inciting

all ranks, and orders, and conditions of men, to increased, and continually increasing efforts, in the cause of our most holy religion.

Was it religious indifference that lighted up the labours of Claudius Buchanan; that dictated his "Star in the East,"—his "Light of the World,"—and his "Eras of Light?" Is it religious indifference that has already spread two thousand Bible Societies over the face of a benighted world; and stirred up in the hearts of an innumerable multitude of Christian men, an unquenchable desire to diffuse the word of God, not only throughout all the borders of their own home, but also over the remotest regions of the habitable globe? Has religious indifference planted the five hundred missionary stations, by which the Moravians, the methodists, the baptists, the presbyterians, the congregationalists, the Anglican, (I wish I could add the American-Anglo) church, have carried the glad tidings of salvation to unnumbered millions of souls, in the four quarters of the globe, that were perishing in their blood, without God, and without Christ, and without hope: and have been permitted to be fellow-workers with God, in hastening the approach of that glorious day, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; in accelerating the fulfilment of that gracious promise to his beloved Son, to give him the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his dominion; in hurrying onward the arrival of that blessed hour, when Jew and Gentile shall bow down together, at the foot of the cross, in faith, and fear, and love, and gratitude, and adoration, of one common Lord, even the Lord Jesus Christ, God their righteousness, and God their strength; when every partition wall shall be broken down, every sectarian prejudice laid low, and all the sons and daughters of men, from the north and from the south, and from the east, and from the west, shall come and worship their Redeemer, together with God the Fa-

ther, and God the Holy Ghost, as their covenant Jehovah, their Creator, Preserver, Saviour, and Sanctifier?

Towards the close of the publication last alluded to, occurs the following paragraph:—"The *great* principle, into which *all* the other principles of the churchman may be resolved, that we are saved from the guilt and damnation of sin, by the merits and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, received in the exercise of penitence and faith, *in union* with his church, by the participation of its sacraments and ordinances from the hands of her authorized ministry, distinguished the church in her first and purest state. It is the *universal* reception of this principle, which, *alone*, (in 1820,) can restore purity and unity to that Christian family, which is *now* deformed and distracted by heresies and schisms."

If a simple layman might presume to offer counsel in these high matters, I would suggest the propriety of making one single experiment, to wit: endeavouring to build up the American-Anglo-Church, by outpreaching, outpraying, and outliving the clergy of all other denominations; instead of consigning to uncovenanted perdition, all who have not been so fortunate as to receive the sacrament of baptism from an authorized bishop, priest, or deacon. The scheme of exclusive churchmanship has been tried now, for at least thirty years, and the American-Anglo-Church still halts fearfully in the rear of other religious sects; for example, the presbyterians, the congregationalists, the baptists, and the methodists.

Seeing, then, that this intolerant, uncharitable system of theology has *not* rendered the church equal to other communions, why not endeavour to bring up her lee way, by avoiding all disputes about unessentials, and directing all their strength to obey the emphatic command of the Redeemer—"preach the Gospel?"

It is high time for *all* denominations of professing Christians to know, that *practical* Christianity is some-

thing more than either mere morality, or the mere government order, rites, and ceremonies of any particular church; or than *both* these combined. It implies a right state of the heart, thoughts being actions in the eye of God, corresponding to, and impelling the external acts of piety and devotion; in *which* state of the heart, alien to man by nature, and created by spiritual, *not* baptismal, regeneration, the real, the spiritual essence of religion consists.

It is likewise to be remembered, that in Christian communities, the clergy are the general channels of good, or evil, to the surrounding people. An evangelical clergy is continually gathering converts to God out of the world, and building up the church of Christ in purity and strength; whereas, a formal priesthood, however authorized, merely collects an assembly of worldlings, whom it encourages to rely for salvation on some supposed external privileges; and, eventually, both priest and people go to their own place.

Now, allowing that the balance of the argument drawn from the New Testament, together with the whole current of historical evidence, is in favour of the position, that episcopacy was the primitive and apostolic order of the government and discipline of the visible church, there is no reason that we should *therefore* nourish a spirit of sectarian and exclusive bigotry, and presume that eternal salvation is confined to that particular religious persuasion; seeing, that many of the wisest and best men that ever lived, have argued ably, and acted conscientiously, upon other and far different views.

Can we be so iron-hearted, as archbishop Wake and bishop Andrews call it, as to deny real religion, and eternal life, through the sacrifice, the righteousness, and the intercession of the Son of God, to such men as Luther, and Calvin, and Claude, and Owen, and Baxter, and Watts, and Doddridge, and Edwards, and Davies, and innumerable multitudes of burning and shining lights, who, in their allotted

hour, were made the blessed instruments of awakening their fellow-sinners to a sense of their own guilt by nature; and thence leading them to the foot of the cross for forgiveness, and reconciliation with God?

Are such men, of whom the world was not worthy, to be excluded from Christian fellowship; to be shut out from the communion of the saints; to be consigned over to the uncovenanted mercy of God? Is not the covenant of grace, made with all true believers? with all those who, feeling themselves to be sinners, fly unto God for mercy, through Christ; and to whom God gives the Holy Spirit, which first regenerates, and then progressively sanctifies them, both in heart and in life? with all those who find peace from the Son of God, and from the Spirit of God; from the Lord Jesus Christ, forgiveness; from the Holy Ghost, sanctification? with all those, who, under the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, are assured, that although sin still remains lurking in the deeper folds, and buried in the inmost recesses of the heart, it shall not regain dominion, nor shall they come into condemnation; but being accepted in the beloved, shall give evidence of what manner of spirit is in them, by wishing what the Father wishes, and hating what the Father hates? with all those who study the Holy Scriptures, with prayer for forgiveness through the Lord Christ, for assurance of pardon through the Holy Spirit, and for grace to obey the commandments of God; seeing, that the gift of the Holy Ghost is promised to *all* those, who, despairing of themselves, rest for righteousness on the Son of God?

Is not salvation altogether individual? can one man be saved by another's faith, or damned by another's works? The declaration of Jehovah himself is, "he that believeth, shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned." Erasmus, when he became acquainted with the persecuted puritans, in England, exclaimed, "may I live their life, and die their death!"

That saint, Henry Martyn, who was, himself, one of the firmest and brightest pillars of the Anglican Church, as well as one of the most intrepid, zealous, faithful, and illustrious of all Christian warriors, says: "the ritual of the Christian churches, their good forms, and every thing they have, is a mere shadow, without the power of truth; but it is impossible to convince the people of the world, (the pharisees and formalists,) that what *they* call religion, is merely a thing of their own, having *no* connexion with God and his kingdom. How senseless is the zeal of churchmen against dissenters, and of dissenters against the church! The kingdom of God is neither meat, nor drink, nor any thing perishable; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is an afflicted and poor people that shall call upon the name of the Lord; not those, who, professing themselves to be wise, have become fools."

And Mr. Martyn's admirable biographer observes, that "a love for particular popular preachers, a fiery zeal in religion, a vehement excitation of the animal feelings, as well as rigid austerities, are false criterions of genuine piety; and are in full perfection among the real followers of the crescent, as well as among the pretended disciples of the cross."

The controversy is worse than idle, as to which is the *exclusive* church that holds the monopoly of salvation. The *argumentum ad modestiam*, as to numbers, ought to deter very many religious sects from arrogating to themselves such a presumptuous claim. There are about two hundred millions of nominal Christians in the world; of which ten millions repose in the bosom of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches. Are the other one hundred and ninety millions, to say nothing of the eight hundred millions of Mahometans and Pagans, swarming upon the surface of the earth, all consigned to remediless perdition?

There are not ten millions of any other single protestant denomination, whether of presbyterians,

of congregationalists, or of methodists; and are all other Christian persuasions utterly lost, excepting the little handful of methodistical, or congregational, or presbyterian candidates for heaven? Are the exclusive churchmen aware how much *their* theory is in accordance with the claims of that elderly lady, who is dressed in scarlet, and drunk with the blood of the saints?

The fatal mistake of every religious body has been, to assume to itself, to its own little peculiar sect, the exclusive title of "*the church of Christ.*" Papal Rome very charitably devotes all denominations out of her own pale, to eternal death; and very wisely urges this truly catholic spirit, as, *in itself*, a proof of her being the only true church. The high formalists of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches, with great complacency, consign all nonepiscopalians to uncovenanted perdition. So, the bigots and pharisees of all persuasions, baptists, methodists, presbyterians, independents, covenanters, and so forth, hedge the Christian church within their own minute respective circles.

The church of Christ consists of all faithful believers in him, by whatever outward name or symbol known, wheresoever located, or scattered, and howsoever worshipping, and adoring him; provided they are regenerated and quickened by the Holy Spirit, and give external evidence of their faith by a life of holiness, dedicated to the service and glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. One of the propositions of the pious Quesnel, condemned in 1713, by the formalism of the Roman church, in the bull *unigenitus*, "as false, captious, shocking, offensive to pious ears, scandalous, pernicious, rash, injurious to *the church*—that is, the popish sect,—and her practice; contumelious, not only against *the church*, but likewise, against the secular powers; seditious, impious, blasphemous, heretical, and manifestly reviving several heresies," runs in these words: "what is the church, but the con-

gregation of the children of God, adopted in Christ, redeemed by his blood, living by his spirit, acting by his grace, and expecting the grace of the world to come?"

But, notwithstanding this Scriptural, and truly evangelical doctrine, the many various religious sects, which divide and agitate Christendom, still persist in urging their respective claims to exclusive churchmanship. The papists profess to find in the Scriptures their own Saint Peter and his omnipotent keys; their mass and transubstantiation; their auricular confession and purgatory; their infallibility; their right to stifle all opposition to the papal will in the tears and blood of their mangled, mutilated victims.

The exclusive Anglican and American-Anglo churchmen demonstrate from the Bible the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, in lineal descent from the apostles, and unchurch, uncovenant, and unchristianize all other denominations, who deny or doubt this demonstration. In the same revealed word of God, the presbyterians discover a parity of ministers, and their own peculiar form of ecclesiastical government; the independents discern, that every separate congregation is, in itself, a separate, and distinct church, amenable to no other or higher clerical tribunal; the methodists find, beyond all possibility of a peradventure, that the protomartyr, Stephen, was the first *local* preacher in their communion; and the *sine nomine secta* perceives a very clear revelation from heaven, that the New Testament proscribes *all* clergy, of every order, sort, and kind; and permits none but laymen, who have some secular occupation during the weekdays, as tinkers, weavers, cobblers, *et id genus omne*, to be teachers and preachers, and expounders of the law and Gospel, on the Sabbath.

Dean Paley, in his sermon on the distinction of orders in the church, states his opinion, that the Scriptures mark out *no* particular form of church

government; and that the New Testament prescribes no particular gradations of priesthood to be observed throughout Christendom; but that each age, and country, and community, is left at liberty to model its own church, both internally and externally, according to its own notions of propriety and expediency.

However this may be, one thing is certain; that there is *no* exclusive church, to the professing members of which eternal salvation is exclusively confined. For it is manifest, that divine Providence blesses *every* sect and denomination of Christians among whom the doctrines of the cross are faithfully preached; whether they be episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregational. All these religious bodies have been blessed, as instruments in the hand of God, and under the quickening, sanctifying influences of the spirit, to the conversion of sinners, the purifying of the life and conduct, and the salvation of souls; as is evident, by a cloud of witnesses, in different ages, and in every clime.

Now, if *any one* church, whether Greek, or Latin, or protestant, either as a whole, or in any of its various parts, subdivisions, or sects, were an exclusive church; the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the church, would *not* bless the ministers of any other denominations with his presence, nor aid them with the illuminations of his spirit. It behoves us, therefore, to extend a catholic spirit of love, esteem, and reverence, towards all, of whatsoever denomination or persuasion, who preach Jesus Christ, and him crucified, in purity of doctrine, in singleness of heart, in simplicity, and in truth.

A good old divine says: "I have seen a field here, and another there, stand thick with corn. An hedge or two has parted them. At the proper season the reapers entered. Soon the earth was disburthened, and the grain was conveyed to its destined place; where blended together in the barn, or in the stack, it could not be known that a hedge once separated this corn from that. Thus it is with the church. Here

it grows, as it were, in different fields, severed, it may be, by various hedges. By and by, when the harvest is come, all God's wheat shall be gathered into the garner, without one single mark to distinguish that once they differed in the outward circumstantial of modes and forms."

If there were an exclusive church, membership in which is essential to salvation, and all out of its pale were consigned to perdition, or left to an uncovenanted contingency, it is fair to infer, that the Holy Spirit would have revealed it in the word of God, as plainly as he has revealed any other truth, belief in which is necessary to salvation; as for example: "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength;" or, "he that believeth (in Christ Jesus,) shall be saved; he that believeth not, shall be damned." But, as this is not done, does it become Christians, who profess to serve one and the same Master, to love one common Lord, to condemn those who differ from them in opinion about church order, and church government, about external ceremonies, rites, and discipline?

It would be well, if formalists of all denominations would remember, that when our Lord and Master declared, that whenever two or three should be gathered together in *his* name, he would be in the midst of them; he did *not* say, two or three episcopalians, or two or three presbyterians, or two or three congregationalists; but simply, when two or three are gathered together in *my* name. The main stress is laid upon the all-important point of being gathered together in *His* name, and not in the name of any particular religious persuasion or sect.

In some periods of the English history, the controversies, as to the modes, and forms, and orders of ecclesiastical polity, prevailed so much, and raged so fiercely, as almost entirely to extinguish the light of Christian charity among those, who nevertheless

professed to believe in the same Lord and Master. This was particularly the case in the reigns of Elizabeth, and the four first Stuarts. Indeed, during the time of the two Charleses, so much was written and said, on either side, concerning the form of church government, that it became of more importance in the eyes of the unreflecting multitude, than the doctrines of that Gospel of peace, which both churches professed to embrace.

The more violent of the prelatists and presbyterians were as illiberal and intolerant as the papists themselves, and permitted no salvation beyond the narrow circle of their own respective sects. It was altogether in vain to inform these zealots, that if the Lord Jesus Christ, the author and founder of our holy religion, had considered *any* peculiar form of church order and government, as indispensably necessary to salvation, he would have revealed it in the New Testament, with the same perspicuity and precision as he revealed that of the Jewish polity, under his elder and more imperfect dispensation, in the Old Testament.

Both parties were as violent and fierce, as if they could plead a distinct revelation from heaven, at once to command and justify their own intolerance. The execrable Laud, in the day of his dominion over his infatuated master and a subservient clergy, fired the train, not only by his cold-blooded cruelties inflicted upon the English, but also by imposing upon the Scottish, church ceremonies, and forms, and orders, foreign to their habits, and alien from their opinions. This ecclesiastical tyranny was successfully resisted, and the presbyterian model finally established in Scotland; from whose national church episcopalians, seceders, and other religious sects, dissent.

In our own days, in these United States, controversy has been rife respecting ecclesiastical polity. The chief champions of episcopacy are the late Dr. Bowden, bi-

shop Hobart, and Dr How. The presbyterian form of church government was defended by Dr. Mason, and Dr. Miller. Dr. How labours to prove, that controversy is the life and soul of religion; and that to it, principally, is the episcopal church indebted for its growth in the United States; and that by its aid episcopacy will cover the whole earth, about the time when the Millennium first sets in.

But it may be doubted, if continual controversy do not call up feelings, and tempers, and dispositions, *far other* than those which characterize the servant and disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is to be feared, that controversy, in general, does *not* answer to the apostle's description of charity; and it is a consummation devoutly to be wished, that the *only* controversy among Christians were, who should, most faithfully, zealously, and constantly, in season and out of season, preach Jesus Christ and him crucified, as the only foundation of present peace, and future hope, and eternal safety, to individuals; as the only source of domestic, social, and national concord, joy, prosperity, strength, and honour.

There are some fine and forcible observations in Dr. Mason's "Plea for catholic communion upon catholic principles," upon the evil of rending the unity of the Christian church by contests about minute and unimportant points of difference among those who agree in all the essential doctrines of Revelation. He shows, with great ability, and much learning, that the love of unity, and the horror of schism, prevailed in the hearts of all the best and brightest Christians of the primitive ages, and shone out with renewed lustre in the saints and heroes of the Reformation, and their followers of succeeding generations; that the Luthers and Calvins, the Melancthons, and Bucers, and Martyns, the Dutch, French, and Swiss churches, and the evangelical interest, generally, were desirous of basing the communion of the church upon the broad foundation of

the *common faith*, without regard to minor differences, and that it will never be well with Christendom until an union be endeavoured and effected between all those who are orthodox in *doctrine*, though differing among themselves in some circumstances about church government.

And surely, a Christian spirit and temper are infinitely preferable to all controversies respecting matters *not* essential to salvation. Far better would it be for all real Christians, whether Calvinistic or Arminian, whether episcopalian, or presbyterian, or congregational, to cease their disputations upon extreme points of doubtful construction and unintelligible abstruseness, about discipline, and habits, and ceremonies, and external rites and observances; and to unite all their forces in harmonious combination, against the real enemies of their common faith, whether open or secret; against atheists and deists, against Arians and Antinomians, against Socinians and formalists; to uphold the doctrines of the cross; to strip off the mask of self-righteousness from the formal pharisee; and to expose the impiety and blasphemy of the avowed opponents of Revelation.

Memorable, says the preface to the "*Jus divinum*," is the story of bishop Ridley and bishop Hooper, two famous martyrs, who, when they were out of prison, disagreed about certain ceremonial garments, but when they were put into prison, they quickly and easily agreed together. Adversity united them, whom prosperity divided.

We, certainly, do prefer the union of all Christian denominations, in their efforts to evangelize the world, to all assertions of the exclusive claims of episcopacy to covenant mercy, and the consequent condemnation of all nonepiscopal communions, to a state and condition, no better, if not worse, than that of the heathens, who never heard the sound of the glorious Gospel. It must, in very deed, be an iron heart, to say nothing of the head piece, which would

degrade, unchurch, unchristen, all other *protestant* persuasions, the papists being cordially embraced as brother episcopalian, and proscribe them as having no sacraments, no covenant right to salvation, for want of a ministry derived by an uninterrupted succession of episcopal ordination from the apostles.

All formalists, of every religious persuasion, are prone to set up a monopoly of salvation for themselves; from which they rigorously exclude every one, who cannot, or will not, pronounce their shibboleth. In Christendom, the papists are supposed to be most strenuous in asserting their exclusive church privileges on earth, and for heaven. The Hindu brahmun, perhaps, is equally charitable, when he denies the possibility of future happiness to any Christian faith and holiness, unless the candidate for immortality occasionally refreshes himself with a naked seat on tenpenny nails.

But the Jews themselves were signal examples of this exclusive, formal disposition. At the advent of the Messiah, these people maintained the *exterior* of piety, although the power of godliness was lost. Their chief priests, and popular leaders, Josephus describes as profligate wretches, who had purchased their places by bribes, or other iniquitous acts; and maintained their authority by the most flagitious crimes. Their religious creed was split up into various sects, which were, all of them, more intent on the gratification of private enmity, than the advancement of piety, or the promotion of the public welfare. The subordinate members followed the corruption of their head; the priests, and Levites, and all the inferior clergy, were most abandoned and dissolute; while the laity, profiting by their clerical example, plunged into every species of depravity, and drew down the vengeance of God upon their devoted land.

Yet were these Jews the very stanchest formalists; attached to the Mosaic ritual; and the traditions of their elders, with a maniac fanaticism and

zeal. These hypocrites assumed the most sanctimonious appearances before the world; uttering their set forms of long and loud prayers at the corners of crowded streets; publicly parading their religion and their almsgiving, yet, in private, exercising the most horrible cruelty and oppression; devouring widows' houses, robbing the orphan, perpetually bawling out, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord! paying tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, to support the splendour of the priesthood; and, in practical life, violating the first duties of morality, justice, faithfulness, and mercy.

Their great men were incredibly depraved; many of them Sadducees in principle, and in practice; profligate sensualists; more abandoned than the corrupted ages of the heathen world; vieing, which should surpass each other in impiety against God, and injustice towards man. They compassed sea and land to proselyte the pagans; and when they had gained a convert, they soon rendered him a two-fold child of hell; making him, by their own scandalous example, more profligate than before his conversion.

The circumstance of their nation having been blessed with a direct revelation from God, instead of expanding, narrowed their minds into all the bitterness of theological hatred. They regarded the uncircumcised heathens with sovereign scorn; and branded them as enemies of Jehovah, because they were, by birth, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and lived strangers to their covenant of promise. They would not eat with, nor do the least act of kindness for, nor hold any social intercourse with them.

Hence, they could not endure the calling of the Gentiles to participate in the Christian salvation; wherefore, the apostles, particularly Paul, laboured to confirm this point by reference to numerous prophecies in the Old Testament. In the true spirit of exclusive churchmanship, also, they professed to be-

lieve, that *all* Jews would infallibly be saved; and that Abraham sits near the gates of hell, and does not permit any Israelite, however wicked, to descend thither.

The Rev. Samuel Wix, likewise, is too stout an exclusive churchman, to desire to conciliate, or unite with any protestant dissenters. He prefers coalescing with the pope, to uniting with any nonepiscopalian, however sound in Scriptural doctrine; however fervent in evangelical faith; however pure and holy in a life regulated by the precepts of his blessed Redeemer. "No," says he, "the union is *not* desired between members of the (English) church and schismatics; but between the church of Rome and the church of England, *if*, indeed, they may be designated, as churches under *different* names. Union is *not*, indeed, nor *ought* to be desired between the true apostolical church, and those who renounce apostolical discipline; but union between the church of England and the church of Rome, on proper Christian grounds."

Mr. Wix professes to be struck with "horror" at the schismatic spirit of the day, and says, that "no sound catholic, whether of the church of England, or of the church of Rome, can unite with protestants while they refuse to be under the discipline of *the* church, (Roman or Anglican?) or to bow to its faith." And Mr. Wix discovers, by a round of reasoning, doubtless quite satisfactory to himself, and peradventure, also, to the papists, that "the impiety of protestant nonepiscopalians are far more injurious to Gospel truth, than the errors attaching to the Roman catholic faith."

Protestant impieties, and popish errors? but *eheu jam satis est*.

Upon these asseverations, somewhat marvellous in the mouth of a beneficed clergyman of the English church, who is probably on his way to the episcopate, the Christian Observer thus mildly animadverts: now, without going into the inquiry, if the

episcopal form of church government be so absolutely essential, that none can be within the pale of Christ's visible church, who have not adopted it; without discussing the question, whether the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has irreparably injured the faith by employing Lutheran missionaries in the East Indies; and whether all classes of dissenters, even those who hold the doctrines of the church of England, are schismatics, who acknowledge not Christ and despise his sacraments; although our own opinion is at utter variance with that of Mr. Wix, we would ask, why not attempt to bring over to the establishment, those who maintain substantially the same creed but have not adopted the same discipline? If you will try conciliation, why not begin with protestants?

Why not, indeed? or does Mr. Wix think it safer, wiser, and more consonant to Scripture, to seek a family alliance with the murderess of the saints of God, rather than with Christian communities? The Christian Observer expresses his surprise at the marked difference of tone manifested by Mr. Wix towards many classes of protestants, from that used by him towards papists; a tone, as to protestants, not very consistent with charity; and as to papists, not in accordance with that of our most venerated reformers and martyrs; in the company of whom, Mr. Wix, doubtless, as well as many other stanch formalists, both Anglican and American, would have found their sensibilities grievously outraged, when those great fathers of the English church spoke out the truth plainly, and without disguise, as they were warranted by the word of God, against the impiety, the blasphemy, the idolatry, the intolerance, the cruelty, the blood-guiltiness of papal Rome.

Very many of our modern exclusive churchmen, besides Mr. Wix, hold in entire abhorrence the protestant declarations against the popish scheme, of such men as Coverdale, Philpot, Taylor, Rogers, Hooper, Bale, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and others,

whose sentiments the Christian Observer cites as being altogether opposite to those of the Vicar of St. Bartholomew the Less.

Mr. Wix's notable device of destroying the British and Foreign Bible Society, by the proposed coalition of the Anglican and Roman churches, will receive due consideration, when we examine the real grounds of the present deadly hostility, both popish and protestant, European and American, to the circulation of the pure, unsophisticated word of God, without note, and without comment; unincumbered with the help of any mere human composition, in whatever shape, or form, or substance.

A most refreshing contrast to the modern scheme of exclusive churchmanship, may be found in the answer of bishop Ridley, during his last examination before the popish commissioners, a little before they burned him for being a Christian. "I acknowledge," says this blessed reformer and martyr, "an unspotted church of Christ, in the which no man can err, without the which no man can be saved, which is spread throughout all the world, that is, the congregation of the faithful; and where Christ's sacraments are duly ministered, his Gospel truly preached and followed, there doth Christ's church shine as a city upon a hill. I am fully persuaded, that Christ's church is *every where* founded, in *every* place where his Gospel is truly received, and effectually followed."

It is utterly vain to hope, that by railing at other denominations, and claiming a monopoly of salvation for episcopalians, the American-Anglo-Church can ever flourish in a country, where all religious sects are placed on equal political ground; where the social institutions, supporting liberty, both civil and clerical, encourage inquiry, and where those people, who are in the habit of reading the Scriptures for themselves, are able to judge what ministers preach the Gospel, and what ministers neglect, or pervert that sacred duty; and, who, if they exa-

mine the common prayer book, may easily discover when a bishop, priest, or deacon, contradicts, or neutralizes the evangelical liturgy of the Anglican Church; contradicts, by preaching unscriptural doctrine; neutralizes, by keeping back the doctrines of grace.

In consequence, when these inquirers find such a clergyman, and search the Scriptures, where they cannot discover the dogma of exclusive churchmanship; and duly appreciate the value of their own immortal souls, they are apt to transfer themselves to some church, where the Gospel is preached; and thus the evangelical sects increase, while the formal communions diminish.

It is portentous of evil, if the spiritual rulers of the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches cannot so discern the signs of the times, as to discover, that neither of these religious bodies can possibly flourish, by merely calumniating other Christian persuasions, and crying out continually, "the church, the church!" — "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!" which clamour is almost as efficacious as that of "great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Nor is any good to be expected from incessantly railing against all evangelical piety, "as fanaticism, enthusiasm, weakness, irregularity, Calvinism, low churchmanship, methodism," &c. &c.

The existing circumstances of the world preclude the possibility of *any* church making permanent headway, unless by outpreaching, outpraying, and outliving other denominations; which, in fact, is the *only* allowable rivalry in the Christian church. Certainly, if the pulpits, in England and in these United States, be taught to resound with the evangelical doctrines of the articles, homilies, and liturgy, no one need fear the fate, either of the Anglican, or of the American-Anglo-Church.

Formalists of every kind consign all out of their own pale to the uncovenanted mercies of God; that is, in other words, to utter damnation. But God's

covenant of grace is with *individuals*, of all ages and countries, who live by faith in Christ, as God their righteousness; *not* with whole churches. For even the papists themselves do not presume to save, eternally, all within their own pale, though all out of it are irretrievably damned. And they send a goodly number of their devouter brethren into *purgatory*, as a preparation for heaven, which is obtainable only after enduring a *quantum meruit* of burning and torment.

As if punishment and suffering, *in themselves*, had any tendency to produce purity of life, when *unaccompanied* with the effectual operations of the Holy Spirit! As if an unregenerate, though baptized sinner would be the better fitted to enjoy the beatific sanctity of heaven, by being cast into hell fire, for a season! As if an unrenewed heart could possibly enjoy the holy delights of angels, and of archangels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect, and of all the company of heaven!

Salvation is individual, not congregational, not clerical, not national. Jewish individuals, not the Jewish church, were saved by faith in a Messiah to come, under the Old Testament dispensation. As individuals, not any particular visible church, under the Christian scheme, are saved by faith in a Messiah, already come. External orders, and ordinances, and government, and privileges, and discipline, without a personal interest in the all-sufficient sacrifice for sin, will avail us nothing, except to increase our condemnation in that great and terrible day, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead, in the presence of an assembled universe.

All formalists, whether episcopal, or presbyterian, or congregational, make their own church order the sum and substance of religion, as the papists do the traditions and infallibility of their corrupted and schismatic hierarchy; whereas the mere frame and outwork of the order and government of any eccle-

siastical body can only be effectually defended and protected by evangelical religion, keeping watch and ward in the citadel of the heart. The Jews had a theocratic order of church government, a reliance upon which, however, did *not* prevent them, and their church, and nation, from plunging headlong into perdition.

CHAPTER V.

Baptismal Regeneration.

ANOTHER tenet of modern fashionable theology is *baptismal* regeneration.

Into this very important question, which lies at the foundation of all real religion at present, a minute inquiry cannot be made; it must suffice to notice briefly the principal writers on the subject, and to state some of the most obvious objections and consequences arising out of this popish tenet.

Mr. now bishop Mant, at first insisted, that baptism was *always* regeneration, if duly *administered*; that is, if the water was sprinkled, and the service read by any episcopally ordained priest, whether protestant, or papist, or pelagian, or formalist, or Socinian, or deist, or atheist. But afterwards, when grappled with in the controversy by his more evangelical, more able, and more learned brethren, he, in effect, gave up the whole question, by saying, that baptism was regeneration, if duly *received*; that is, by adults, when receiving it by faith; a position denied by no Christian sect or individual; but quite another and distinct consideration from the baptismal regeneration of infants.

Without wandering into any metaphysical subtleties, or losing ourselves amidst the mazes of Biblical criticism, we may simply ask, *if* baptism be *always* regeneration, where is the *only* evidence we can have of spiritual or real regeneration? that is to say, a holy life in *all* who have been episcopally baptized.

Is baptismal regeneration proved by the frowardness, the disobedience, the rebellion against all authority, the unsanctified tempers and dispositions, the envying strifes and bickerings of the great majority of children who have been episcopally christened? by their youth of dissipation and profligacy; their manhood of ambition and worldly calculation; their old age of avarice, and discontent, and querulousness?

These are *not* the fruits of regeneration, as exhibited in the word of God. The glorious liberty of the children of God is the being freed from the darkness of unbelief, and the bondage of moral corruption, and translated into the light of faith, the fire of love, and the law of righteousness. The strong holds of sin on the one hand, and of self-righteousness on the other, are broken down. By the lost condition of our nature, we are insensible of our sinful state, and ignorant of our extreme danger; impenitent, and unbelieving, and self-righteous, though unholy. From this legal, formal state of insensibility, impenitence, unbelief, self-righteousness, and slavery to sin, every child of God is delivered by the effectual operation of the Holy Ghost; who, pointing out the danger of original and actual sin, directs them to Christ alone, as the way, the truth, and the life. No longer habitually self-righteous, they gratefully rest upon the righteousness of Christ, as the *sole* procuring cause of their acceptance in the Father's sight; while they labour after inward conformity to the divine image, and outward conformity to the divine law; being well aware, that without holiness no man can see the Lord; and that faith without works is dead.

An unrenewed person, whether episcopally baptized or not, has *no* spiritual sense; no hearing of the promises; no perception of his own misery; no adequate notion of God's holiness, nor of the perfect purity of the divine law, nor of Christ, as an absolute Saviour, nor of the Holy Spirit, as the re-

vealer of Christ in the heart; no experience of the Father's everlasting love; no communion with him through the ministrations of the Holy Ghost; no feeling of grace, producing conviction, comfort, and sanctification; no hungering and thirsting after spiritual enjoyments and assurances; no yearnings of the soul after the blood, and righteousness and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. If these be experienced, they are indications of spiritual life; if not, mere water baptism, however administered, is no regeneration.

Nevertheless, so little are our formalists aware of these plain Scriptural truths, that recently, one of our largest divines, when applied to by a woman in his congregation, who was labouring under deep convictions of sin, and desirous of receiving some spiritual advice from her pastor, gave it as his decided opinion, "that she had no occasion for a change of heart, because her heart *was* changed at baptism."

Upon receiving this gracious assurance, the woman retired, leaving our doctor delighted with the depth of his own divinity. But, as her mind had been actually illumined by the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, she soon discovered that the doctor's answer was *not* exactly calculated to direct her steps aright in the Christian course; and some time thereafter waited again upon her high priest, and told him that she had now found peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Ghost. To this he answered sharply and roughly, "that she was under a gross delusion; and if she continued such a weak fanatic, she would soon become absolutely crazy; that when she was baptized, her heart received *all* the change that was necessary; that she was then justified, and nothing remained for her to do, but to be confirmed, go to church, occasionally communicate, read the common prayer book, and lead a sober, moral life; and if at any time she fell from her baptismal state, she had only to be sorry and repent, which would bring her back to that happy condi-

tion of regeneration and justification; and she would go to heaven, as a matter of course, upon her covenant claim of communion with the episcopal church."

The poor woman finding neither consolation, nor instruction, from such popish, semi-pelagian doctrine, went over to an evangelical presbyterian, under whose faithful ministry she now sits. The worthy doctor on being told that such conduct on his part was calculated to drive all serious persons from the episcopalian into other churches, exclaimed, "so much the better, I would have all enthusiasts and fanatics leave the church; they are only fit to be presbyterians and methodists."

Undoubtedly, if this laudable scheme of quenching all the operations of the Spirit of God be steadily persevered in, and carried into full effect, the American-Anglo-Church will not long be infected with any taint of Christianity; but will soon exhibit one entire hideous mass of self-righteous formalism; one huge, misshapen carcass of popish, Pelagian putrefaction.

It is precisely such theologues, and such theology, that impart all its point and sting to the following anecdote. "An English nobleman said to Matthew Mead, the nonconformist, 'I am sorry, sir, that we have not a person of your abilities with us in the established church, where they would be extensively useful.' 'You do not, my lord, require persons of great abilities in the establishment; for when you christen a child, you regenerate it by the Holy Ghost; when you confirm a youth, you assure him of God's favour and the forgiveness of his sins; when you visit the sick, you absolve them from all their iniquities; and when you bury the dead, you send them all to heaven. Of what particular service, then, can great abilities be in your communion?' "

There are other divines than Mr. Mead, who certainly act, whatever they may say, as if they thought talents and learning were quite unnecessary incumbrances to "a regular and authorized ministry."

A thoroughgoing formalist, however, is not so decided an enemy to talents and learning, as to all evangelical piety. A late bishop of St. David's dissuaded a lady from hearing Mr. Whitfield preach, lest it might hurt her nerves; concluding, doubtless, that preaching the Gospel might alarm those who are not used to it. Much more recently, a very great dignitary in the Anglican Church said to a lady of quality, who troubled him with a quotation from the apostle of the Gentiles; "do not tell me of St. Paul, madam; it would have been happy for the church, if St. Paul had never written a line of his epistles."

It is truly lachrymable to think how early superstition and formalism began to encroach on the simplicity and spirituality of the Gospel; and to lean their whole weight upon the mere *opus operatum* of external ordinances. The papists soon deemed it convenient to represent baptism as inseparably connected with the absolute and plenary forgiveness of sins; whence many stout believers in the infallibility of the bishop of Rome, wisely postponed the being baptized to the last moment of life, and thus made sure of heaven. It sometimes happened, however, that these persons, by delaying their baptism too long, actually died unbaptized; in which case, one of his relations or friends was baptized in the dead man's stead; and the priest begged God to accept this proxy baptism, in the same manner as if it had been administered to the principal, when living; and thus an unbaptized dead body received the full benefit of baptismal regeneration.

The best divines, including the fathers and founders of the Anglican Church, represent baptism as typical of regeneration; and as the initiatory ordinance, by which persons, whether infant or adult, are incorporated into the visible church, and enrolled among Christian professors. They believe, that the administration of baptism is, *sometimes*, attended with the real, renewing influences of the Holy Ghost; which influences being internal, spiritual, and un-

discernible by the baptizer, the service directs him to state this charitable *hope* of the church, in his address to the sponsors, and in his *presumptive* thanksgiving to God.

They do *not*, however, pretend to bind in an indissoluble cord the regenerating grace of the Spirit to the bare administration of the external ordinance. They leave all such theology to the church of Rome, which consigns to especial perdition those who doubt, that every sacrament, *ipso facto*, confers grace *ex opere operato*, and that baptism, in particular, impresses a certain, indelible, spiritual mark upon the soul. *Si quis dixerit*, says the council of Trent, *per ipsa novæ legis sacramenta, ex opere operato, non conferri gratiam, &c. anathema sit. Si quis dixerit, in tribus sacramentis, baptismo, scilicet, confirmatione, et ordine, non imprimi characterem, in animâ, hoc est signum aliquod spirituale et indelibile, &c., anathema sit.*

But the Anglican Church, except as *misrepresented* by her formal doctors, holds no such tenet. She defines a sacrament to be an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. Baptism, therefore, is not, in itself, regeneration, but only its sign or type. The twenty-seventh article coincides with the church catechism in this respect, when it says: "baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or new birth, whereby as by an instrument, they that *receive* baptism rightly, are grafted into the church." Whence it appears, that baptism and internal regeneration are two distinct things, which, although they may sometimes go together, yet do *not* necessarily, nor constantly accompany each other.

Not very long since, one of our chief American-Anglo-Church divines issued a publication, which deserves notice on account of its theology, both bap-

tismal and other. In stating the meritorious cause, and the conditions of our acceptance with God, the preacher erects a scheme of salvation directly *opposed* to that set forth in the articles and homilies of the Anglican Church; for he in reality ascribes the whole efficiency to *our own* performances of repentance, faith, and good works.

Now the English reformers, in their private writings as well as in the public formularies of their church, expressly declare the perfect righteousness of Christ to be the meritorious cause, the *sole* condition of our acceptance with God. They represent faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the gift of God by the Holy Spirit, as the only effectual mean of union with the Redeemer; and repentance from sin, and a holy life, they uniformly describe as the necessary *effects* of that union. The word of God promises salvation to faith, because it unites the believer to Christ in his justifying righteousness; and the Scriptures promise salvation to repentance and a holy life, because they *imply* faith and are its fruits, and are a proof of union with that Saviour, who is God our righteousness, and God our strength.

The Scriptures require us to believe in the Son of God; to believe that God is so well pleased in his beloved Son, as to require nothing from the sinner but a belief of the truth; to receive the divine evidence that God is already satisfied in the sacrifice of his Son. They uniformly assert, that no professing Christian can give satisfactory evidence of *his* interest in the covenant of grace, unless he live by faith in the Redeemer; enjoy, in some measure, the consolations of the Gospel, and exhibit its fruits in a holy life and conversation; in love to God and love to man.

In this same lucubration it is asserted, that *predestination* only means God's eternal purpose to make certain persons episcopalians; in the same manner as the Roman church interprets the elect of God to signify nothing more than papists. "It maintains,"

says the writer, "on a just construction, the *only* election declared in Scripture, the election of Christians, as a collective body, to the privileges of the Gospel. In like manner, *all* Christians are now the chosen, the elect of God. They are all, *by baptism*, taken out of the world, and placed in God's holy church; received into covenant with him."

That is to say, in other words, the *elect* of God are *all* those, who are by baptism made *churchmen*; for the writer denies the validity of *any other* than episcopal baptism; and scouts the possibility of any other church covenant with God. He invariably calls the episcopal persuasion "*the church*;" and denominates episcopalians "*churchmen*," *par excellence*. In another theological production, he says; "adhere to the government of the church by bishops, priests, and deacons, by which government the visible church of Christ is known. The benefits of church communion are forfeited when we separate from the priesthood, which was instituted by Christ, as the essential characteristic of *his* church. The uniform testimony of all the apostolic and primitive writers establishes the general conclusion, that whoever was in communion with the bishop was in communion with Christ; and whoever was not in communion with the bishop, was *thereby* cut off from communion with Christ; and that sacraments, *not* administered by the bishop, or those commissioned by him were not only *ineffectual* to the parties, but moreover, like the offerings of Korah, *provocations* against the Lord. The *only* mode through which we can be admitted into covenant with God, the only mode by which we can obtain *a title* to those blessings and privileges which Christ has purchased for his mystical body, the church, is the sacrament of baptism."

This tenet, which implies the damnation, not only of all persons unbaptized, but also of all that are non-episcopally baptized, is more horrible than the high Calvinistic notion of infant perdition; because that allows of some infants being elect, and consequently

saved. Nay, all Calvinists do not believe in the damnation of infants; for instance, Mr Toplady, who, on most points, was a very sturdy supralapsarian, thinks that all infants are of the elect from all eternity. This position, however, is at variance with the doctrine of ultra Calvinism, as laid down by honest Fulgentius, bishop of Ruspæ, in Africa, who was considered the Augustine of his age, at the close of the fifth, and beginning of the sixth centuries.

Firmissime tene, says the African prelate, *et nulloatenus dubites, parvulos, sive in uteris matrum vivere incipiunt, et ibi moriuntur, sive cum de matribus nati sine sacramento sancti baptismatis de hoc sæculo transeunt, ignis æterni sempiterno supplicio puniendos*. Nothing short of a passage in the sacred Scriptures in which this asseveration of Fulgentius is directly, and in so many words revealed, will ever induce me to believe that infants, dying in their mother's womb, will be tormented, or rather punished, "*puniendos*," in everlasting flames. And I have not yet found such a passage in any edition of the Bible, in any language that I have either read or consulted.

Observe the milder spirit of a modern Calvinist, in relation to this *strained inference* against little children. The late venerable Thomas Scott, in his remarks on the third chapter of bishop Tomline's "*Refutation of Calvinism*," alike steers clear of the supralapsarian tenet, that all except the elect infants are damned, and the still more execrable notion, borrowed from the papists, by the modern formalists, or baptismal regeneration men, that all unbaptized and non-episcopally baptized infants are doomed to everlasting damnation.

"There is no ground of doubt," says Mr. Scott, "of infants, the children of believers, devoted to God in baptism, dying before they commit actual sin, being saved; but whether all infants, who are baptized, or none else, are questions of a very com-

plicated nature; on which the Scripture gives no light. Our rubric assumes that the profession and engagements made in the name of the baptized infant, and implied in the parents who offer the child to baptism, are sincere; and therefore speaks of the infants as the children of believers; but is properly silent as to others. Yet when we consider the various circumstances which may prevent the baptism of infants, born of believing parents, and that the children of believing Abraham, to whom circumcision was given as the seal of the covenant, by which the Lord engaged to be a God to him, and to his seed, must not be performed before the eighth day; and many would previously die; we cannot be authorized to confine the salvation of those who die in infancy to such as are baptized.

“A few presumptuous, extravagant Calvinists have spoken shocking things of the damnation of infants; but to consign the innumerable multitudes of those, all over the world, and in every age, who die before they commit actual sin, and die unbaptized, to eternal damnation, is *far more* shocking. Such Calvinists may suppose some of the children to be elect, and saved; but this sentiment excludes them all. On both sides, however, it is a presumptuous intrusion into things unseen and unrevealed; and a practical forgetfulness of the words of God by Moses; the secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.”

It may be observed, that Fulgentius has united in himself the doctrine of the sternest Calvinism, in damning little children in their mother's womb, with that of the papists and their faithful followers, the modern formalists, in consigning to everlasting torments all those children who are born, but die unbaptized; *sine sacramento sancti baptismatis*. Between these two precious tenets, Christianity must have a very firm seat.

To the prevalence of exclusive churchmanship, and baptismal regeneration, and similar popish interpolations upon the doctrines of our protestant reformers, a late able and intrepid champion and clergyman of the Anglican Church attributes her alarming decline and impotence. He expressly asserts, that owing to the departure of the national clergy from the principles of the Reformation, the church of England has become the scorn of infidels; that so large a portion of the English people are sunk into a deplorable ignorance of divine things, unparalleled in any other protestant country; that so many of their churches are empty, while dissenting meetings are full to the overflowing.

The melancholy truth is, that in many parts of England, churchmen go to the dissenters, in order to hear the doctrines of *their own* church preached. The ignorant, and openly profane, are indifferent about attending public worship. To this same deviation from the doctrines of their protestant predecessors, on the part of the established clergy, is chiefly to be imputed the vast, and constantly increasing diffusion of *infidelity* in England. Christianity, shorn of its peculiar and distinguishing principles, and reduced to a mere dry, uninteresting system of outward ethics, can take but little hold of the human heart; and is, in itself, no better than a species of thinly disguised deism.

Avowed infidels, who reflect, that the Bible contains certain doctrines, which are embodied in the articles of the Anglican Church, and, at the same time observe, *how many* of the English national clergy incessantly open their mouths, and wield their pens *against* these very doctrines to which they have solemnly subscribed their hands, professedly *ex animo*, are led to conclude, "that the church is merely a state engine, and the priesthood only a respectable trade."

Nay, the Christian Observer, at the close of the year 1820, sounds forth an ominous note of alarm,

respecting the present condition and future prospects of the English clerical establishment: "the state of the church, in particular, calls for serious consideration; and much is required to restore it to its due popularity and efficiency. It demands an active, humble, self-denying, and devotional clergy; men who may gain the hearts and confidence of the people, and who will faithfully watch for souls, as they that must give account; and it demands a very large augmentation of their numbers. It demands, in its ecclesiastical governors, no ordinary share of piety, discretion, and vigilance. It asks, especially, for kind and healing measures; measures, which may counteract the *popular ferment* against the clergy and the church; measures, the very reverse of those which some zealous party men are desirous of carrying into effect. But we drop this subject for the present, as we shall shortly have occasion to allude to it again, in examining the *new* articles of religion, imposed on candidates for holy orders, by the bishop of Peterborough, (Herbert Marsh,) which, as if we had not controversies enough on our hands already, promise to furnish a fruitful source of ecclesiastical warfare, during the year that is before us."

Nearly a hundred years since, Dr. Waterland wrote by far the ablest, the most learned, and most ingenious work that has yet appeared, in support of the popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In the year 1741, appeared a complete refutation of Waterland's book, on Scriptural grounds, by Dr. Doddridge, in his ten sermons on regeneration; I say Scriptural, because Doddridge being a dissenter, was not called upon to clear the doctrines of the church of England from so foul a charge. To speak tenderly, whoever can seriously, and without prejudice, read these sermons of Doddridge, and still persist in baptismal regeneration, must either have a heart harder than the nether millstone, or a head more impenetrable than the hide of a rhinoceros, or both.

In later days, Dr. Pretymen Tomline, now bishop of Winchester, late of Lincoln, stood up as the champion of this popish tenet, in the second chapter of his book, which, by a singular misnomer, he calls a "Refutation of Calvinism." If such a work be a refutation of any thing, it is a refutation of Christianity; for it repudiates, as Calvinistic and damnable, all the essential and characteristic doctrines of Revelation. This man, who has filled in succession three of the most opulent and important bishoprics in the Anglican Church, labours, with his whole strength, to establish doctrines and principles in direct opposition to those exhibited in the public formularies of that church.

He has recourse to every species of sophistry and misrepresentation to compel the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the church of England, and the writings of their framers and founders, to speak a sense, the very reverse of that which their language in all fair and honest construction bears. Nay, he strives to traduce the character, and blacken the reputation of those illustrious divines, who have maintained the real doctrines of the Anglican Church; by representing them as followers of Simon Magus; and by classing them with the wildest heretics, and likening them to the most abandoned and profligate wretches that have, in different ages, perverted and disgraced the Christian system.

The Rev. Thomas Scott, in his "Remarks" on Dr. Tomline's book, has, with singular moderation and forbearance, exposed the ignorance, the misstatements, and the malignity of his diocesan; and fully vindicated the Anglican Church from all the vile and abominable imputations of popery, which were attempted to be fastened upon her. Mr. Scott's work contains an ample exhibition of the sentiments of the evangelical portion of the English clergy, as contradistinguished from those formal tenets of the great majority of that clerical body, which have already excited such a popular ferment against the es-

tablishment; and which formal tenets, if not checked, will, at no distant period, bury that venerable church in the midst of its own ruins.

Still more recently, the Rev. Richard Mant has followed, *haud passibus æquis*, Waterland and Tomline, both of them men of considerable talent and extensive erudition. Mant's tract upon regeneration, to speak charitably of it, is one of the most flimsy, childish, and *unreasoning* exhibitions of theology, that the present age, fertile in such effusions, has produced. Out of evil, however, has arisen good; for this least able, but most flagrantly popish effort in favour of baptismal regeneration, called forth the most triumphant refutation of this doctrine, both on the ground of Scripture and of the public formularies of the Anglican Church, by the Rev. Messrs. John Scott, Bugg, and Biddulph, three evangelical clergymen in the English establishment. This doctrine is also most conclusively shown to be at open war with the Word of God, and with the articles, homilies and liturgy of the church of England, in the Christian Observer for the years 1816 and 1817.

It is necessary to bear in mind the *good faith* of Dr. Mant, in labouring to make protestant divines speak with a popish tongue; for example, in his compiled commentary on the Bible, substituting the word "reformation" for "regeneration," in order to press the great authority of Lowth into the service of baptismal regeneration; and when detected in the artifice, and exposed to the due contempt of all honest men, restoring the word "regeneration" in a subsequent edition.

How far this "distinguished divine," as our American formalists delight to denominate Mant, is qualified to instruct the Christian church, let the following specimen of his theology prove: "our translation of this passage, (Ephes. ii. 8.) for by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; is a little ambiguous, and many

have *unhappily* concluded from it, that faith is the gift of God ; a gift, I mean, in some peculiar sense ; such a gift as is not vouchsafed to mankind in general, like the gift of reason, or *any other* common blessing."

It is surely matter of regret, that this distinguished divine was not consulted by the inspired penmen, who recorded the word of God ; for that word, throughout all its pages of inspiration, leads directly to the unhappy conclusion, that faith *is* the peculiar gift of God, and not quite like any other common blessing ; for example, the air, or earth, or fire. The fathers and founders of the English church too, for want of the benefits of Mr. Mant's lucubrations, have filled the public formularies of that church with the same Scriptural doctrine, that faith *is* the gift of God ; for example, the articles, the homilies, the catechism, and the liturgy, throughout. And *this* is the family Bible, published under the authority of the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," in England, and recommended "as one of the most useful and judicious productions of the age," by five out of the nine bishops of the American-Anglo-Church ; one of whom, the New-York diocesan, acts as its editor, in these United States !

In this tract on regeneration, Dr. Mant asks, with the most edifying simplicity, "where was Simon Magus admonished of the necessity of undergoing *another* new birth ?

Verily, if honest Simon, the sorcerer, be a specimen of a protestant bishop's regenerated saints, *non equidem invideo, miror magis*. The Christian Observer supposes, that Dr. Mant was led into the theological discovery of Simon Magus having undergone the new birth by a misapprehension of the argument of Augustine, as quoted by Wall, namely : "that baptism received with a wicked heart and purpose is yet valid ; and that such a man is to repent, but not to be rebaptized." Whence, the doctor has drawn too stout a conclusion for such slender premises to

bear, to wit: "that there is *no other* than baptismal regeneration possible in this world; that from this time forward, (i. e. from the moment of baptism,) a new principle is implanted, the spirit of grace, which, beside our soul and body, is a principle of action, and that the inward grace *always* accompanies the outward sign of baptism."

Thus Simon Magus appears to have experienced the blessing of baptismal regeneration, with about as much efficacy as do all those unbaptized dead bodies in the Roman church, which enjoy the benefit of baptism by proxy.

The most pernicious part of this popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration is its *tendency* to divest religion of all inward holiness, of all practical piety, and to degrade it into a mere scheme of external ordinances, rites, and ceremonies; and therefore, doubtless, is it so pertinaciously persisted in by so many formalists, although shown to be entirely unfounded in Scripture, or in the evangelical doctrines of the Anglican church; not only by the able and learned writers above mentioned, but also by others; among whom the Rev. Messrs. Simeon, Faber, and Wilson are eminently distinguished. Some benefit, however, has been produced by the discussion, in rendering even formalists themselves ashamed to own this "papistical and absurd" doctrine, as the dean of Chichester calls it, in his Letter to Mr. Faber, wherein he accuses that gentleman of "*falsely*" imputing such a tenet to the majority of the English clergy.

The opponents of Dr. Mant, after proving that *his* doctrine has no foundation in the Scriptures, proceed to show, that it is *not* the doctrine of the Anglican Church, nor of any of her better divines, from the Reformation to the present hour. Mr. Biddulph, in particular, cites, as direct authorities against baptismal regeneration, the writings of Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Cranmer, Jewel, Andrews, Davenant, Hall, Usher, Taylor, Reynolds, Leighton, Pearson, Hop-

kins, Tillotson, Kidder, Beveridge, Bull, Williams, Burnet, Fleetwood, Bradford, Mann, Wilson, Sherlock, Secker, Greene, Law, and Horsley; a goodly array of bishops and archbishops; to which are added, the illustrious names of Frith, Tindal, Turner, Fulke, Hooker, Noel, Rogers, Mede, Barrow, Scougal, Kettlewell, Wall, Woodward, Burkitt, Nelson, South, Whitby, Ostervald, Stebbing, Rotherham, Stonehouse, and Paley.

Thus is left to Dr. Mant the enviable alternative of being opposed by the soundest and most orthodox divines of the church of England; some few of whom he has vainly manœuvred to enlist on his own side, by misquotation and misrepresentation; or of being confuted by numerous tracts of that very Bartlett's-buildings Society, which, with a pleasant inconsistency, has adopted this regeneration tract into its lists. Have all these great divines misunderstood themselves? or has Dr. Richard Mant misapprehended them?

That Dr. Mant is a very puny theologian, is, in itself, a circumstance of no importance; but, as the Christian Observer remarks, *his* doctrine of baptismal regeneration has a most dangerous tendency. Even the able and subtle Waterland shrunk from encountering the peril, to which Mant's doctrine exposes the Anglican Church, for in his "View of Justification," he says: "if they mean, that justification, (to which sense he confines the term regeneration,) is ordinarily given to adults, *without* any preparative, or previous conditions of faith and repentance, this is, indeed, a very new doctrine, and dangerous, and opens a wide door to carnal security, and all ungodliness."

But "fools rush in, where angels fear to tread;" and Richard Mant has the courage to assure us, that his worthy predecessor, Simon Magus, was not only justified, but sanctified, also, by baptism.

The two main evils, resulting from Dr. Mant's positions, as fully shown by Mr. Scott and Mr. Biddulph, are *antinomianism* and *popery*, seeing, that regene-

ration *without* effects, meets us continually, and under all its most dangerous delusions, as filling the *episcopally* baptized, indiscriminately, with all joy and peace in believing; this distinguished divine connecting inseparably with episcopal baptism, a full and free justification, and plenary remission of all sins, original and actual, *without* fulfilment, either real or supposed, of the previous conditions of faith and repentance.

Now this complete and open avowal of the old exploded, popish doctrine of the *opus operatum*, in the nineteenth century, by a man who has subscribed the articles of a protestant church, certainly exhibits as much zeal and valour, as discretion and honesty. Bishop Jewel, the great apologist of the church of England, shows most abundantly, that one of the principal grounds on which that church *separated* herself from all intercourse with the see of Rome, was the doctrine held by the papists, of a necessary connexion between the *opus operatum* in the two sacraments, and grace and salvation. The English reformers perceived the unscriptural and dangerous tendency of this doctrine. Nor is the danger less now, as appears from the irreligious temper and conduct of the great majority of persons baptized in the protestant episcopal church.

Bishop Burnet, the study of whose exposition of the articles the General Convention of the American-Anglo-Church has enjoined upon all candidates for orders, says expressly, "we reject, not without great zeal against the fatal effects of this error, all that is said of the *opus operatum*, the very doing of the sacrament; we think it looks more like the incantations of heathenism, than the purity and simplicity of the Christian religion."

After reviewing the labours of Mr. Scott and Mr. Biddulph, in support of the Scriptural and protestant doctrine of spiritual, against the popish and pagan tenet of baptismal regeneration, the Christian Observer concludes with some valuable remarks on

Dr. Mant's performance and its tendencies. He says, the errors of these tracts on regeneration and conversion are so obvious, that except for a certain imposing, plausible alacrity, and easy volubility of style, it seems impossible for them not to strike the most ordinary apprehension. It is no credit to the boasted depth of reading and thinking in the present age, that these pitiable pamphlets have obtained any currency.

They possess neither information nor reasoning, nor the commonest consistency. Their utmost boast is a sophistical appeal to some *misconceived* expressions in the liturgy, and a very few *misunderstood* authorities. The old popish principle of literal interpretation, this *is* my body, which conducted so many protestants to the flames of martyrdom, is revived in all its force; for example—"baptism is regeneration; wherein I was made a member of Christ. He saved us by the washing of regeneration. Words cannot be plainer: why should we resort to a forced, an unnatural, and a presumptuous construction, to supply us from a distance with the uncertain shadow of a blessing, when the plainest and most easy interpretation of our Saviour's words places the *substance* immediately in our hands?"

Is it baptismal regeneration, or its twin sister, *transubstantiation*, which Dr. Mant thus labours to establish?

In developing his theological views, Dr. Mant has *not* fairly attempted to meet one difficulty, or to explain one opposing sentiment, either in the authorities to which he refers, or in the church formularies; for example, the *apparently* conditional interrogatories before baptism, with the unconditional grant maintained by him, of the spiritual grace afterwards. Nor has he explained in *what* sense the church seems absolutely to promise eternal life, as well as regeneration, to the baptized. Nor has he reconciled the liturgical views with those of the Anglican Church, which they seem to contradict, particularly in the

twenty-fifth article. He has left every difficulty to shift for itself.

Indeed, these tracts betray a perfect ignorance of the very nature and first rudiments of a sacrament. They do not adhere to the same view of it for two pages together. His predominant language, however, is that the sign *is* the thing signified; baptism *is* regeneration. At other times, baptism only conveys regeneration. But the popish error, the peculiar conceit of this protestant churchman is, that the sacrament to be valid, must *always* be attended with the grace. Thus, according to him, every baptism lawfully, that is, episcopally administered, is valid; but every valid baptism has the grace tacked to it; therefore, every lawful, or episcopal baptism, is inseparably connected with the saving grace. Q. E. D.

This, it must be confessed, is a very comfortable and wholesome doctrine for all confirmed thieves and midnight murderers; who have only to postpone their baptism, until they are convicted by the jury, and sentenced to death by the judge; and then prevail upon the ordinary of Newgate to baptize them episcopally and lawfully, the moment before their friend Jack Ketch swings them off; and, *if* Dr Mant be correct in his theology, they will go to heaven from the gallows, quite as straight as from the bench of bishops.

And *this* is the doctrine, which a protestant bishop promulgates, in order to promote private and public morals, in the present feverish and perturbed state of Christendom, when all old institutions are rocking to their deepest foundations; and when every new establishment is exploding amidst the blaze of revolutionary fires!

To say the least, this seems to be but a short-sighted scheme; but perhaps, bishop Mant is satisfied that the existing order of things will last out his time; and posterity, like his own baptismal doctrine, must be left to shift for itself; according to the apothegm of that sapient civic magistrate, who de-

clared, that he did not see why he should care about posterity, since posterity had done nothing for him. *Après nous le deluge*, was the watchword of Madame Pompadour and the regent Orleans. And after them the deluge *did* indeed come.

A very slight inspection of its merits will prove Dr. Mant's system to be contradictory and suicidal. At one time, his regeneration consists in privileges, which may be forfeited by an improper conduct, or state of mind; at another, it consists in that good state of mind and heart which best secures those privileges. At one time, "a change of heart, as conversion, renovation, and the like, may take place before baptism;" at another, on Hooker's authority misunderstood, "baptism is a step, which to our sanctification here, hath not any before it." Nay, renovation, which, he says, is the renewal of regenerating grace, may happen before regeneration itself. His whole tract is professedly written to prove *unqualified* regeneration at baptism; and yet he talks of "*qualifications* for regeneration."

Indeed, this distinguished divine appears, hastily and unreflectingly, to have adopted the different and contradictory notions of various and clashing systems, without being able to give them even the semblance of any connexion by his own ingenuity; whence his tracts teem with inconsistency and self-contradiction; in addition to being at variance with all sound and orthodox antiquity, in *separating* the ideas of renewal, faith, repentance, and a holy life, from that of regeneration. It is but justice also to state, that this potential polemic has contrived to overthrow his own positions by all the very few authorities, of whatever age or kind, to which he has ventured to appeal.

The most serious charge, however, against this doctrine, is its pernicious tendency; a tendency, to be sure, bounded by its currency, which, in the present age of Scriptural inquiry, cannot be either extensive or permanent. Its *tendency* is to blot out from

the Christian system the necessity of faith and of all spiritual religion; all that distinguishes a soul, born of God, and united to the Saviour, and led by the spirit, from a merely decent formalist. The neglect of this distinction is the great practical heresy of every age, and of none more than the present. So that Dr. Mant's tenets tend directly to sap the foundation of all vital piety, of all personal holiness.

Dr. Waterland, with whose ingenious speculations it is *not* intended to compare Mant's childish contradictions, asserts, that infants are justified, that is, regenerated, in baptism without either faith or works: and in the true spirit of such a doctrine, asks: "what occasion for disturbing Christians now, with the question, whether good works go before justification, or not? Are we not, all of us, or nearly all, ten thousand to one, baptized in infancy, and therefore regenerated, and justified of course?"

But Dr. Mant throws a cast even beyond this. However unscriptural, unprotestant, unchurchmanlike, and dangerous it is to say, that infants are justified without faith, when the very sacrament of baptism is a sacrament of faith; and the service itself presupposes their faith, yet, extending the application to adults and to *all* episcopally baptized persons, has never been done so openly and unblushingly by any protestant writer, as by Dr. Mant, whose system is a most awful surrender of the great evangelical doctrine of justification by faith, and the substitution, in its room, of the formal tenet of justification by baptism.

In his first studied definition of conversion, upon which the whole system, in his second tract, is built, he omits altogether any mention of faith. Sorrow for sin, repentance, purposes of amendment, the use of ordinances, a change of heart and life, with perseverance, are its only conditions; and not one word is said of reliance on the atonement, or reference by faith to that blood of Christ which cleanseth from all

sin ; any more than if the name of Christ had never been heard of.

This is the essence of the scheme of baptismal regeneration ; the essence of formalism, denying the very foundation of faith, and levelling the whole fabric of Christianity to the dust. Justification by faith alone in the merits of Christ, is the doctrine of the Bible, the doctrine of protestants, the doctrine of the Anglican Church, the doctrine to which Christians owe all their hopes, the doctrine, in defence of which the English reformers and martyrs died, the doctrine which the popish prelate, Gardiner, laboured most stoutly to oppose by the favourite and prevailing arguments of the Roman see, the rack, the dungeon, the gibbet, and the flame ; because he saw that if it were once admitted into *his* church, the entire mass of papal superstition and idolatry, including transubstantiation, and baptismal regeneration, must speedily perish.

The Christian Observer, out of pure charity, acquits Dr. Mant of *any intention* respecting these doctrines, on the ground of his *not* being able to see their real tendency ; but he does not acquit him of *intending* to discountenance what his tracts are directly calculated to discountenance, spiritual religion and vital piety. For *his* system teaches, that spiritual religion is either every where, or no where ; either that baptism gives it to all, or that it is necessary to none. Now it is absurd to talk of any spiritual change effected in *all* by episcopal baptism ; seeing that it is a denial of all experience, and incapable of any rational evidence.

Regeneration, says Mant, is given to *all* at baptism ; but, after baptism, all have not spiritual religion ; indeed, none have it, without the same instruction, as if there had been no previous regeneration. Regeneration, therefore, is *not* spiritual religion ; which, indeed, according to this new scheme of divinity, has no existence but in the disordered

imagination of brainsick fanatics, as methodists, Calvinists, and the like.

This system dilutes Christianity into the mere principles of natural religion, and natural conscience; making baptism secure to us a reception of our imperfect works and frail principles of nature into favour with God, through the merits of Christ. It makes baptism a seal to the *mitigated* law of Christianity; and a pledge, that such as we are, if we do our best, and use the aid afforded us, we shall continue in our state of baptismal justification.

Can any thing be more destructive of all true spirituality of heart, all genuine conversion, and devotedness of the whole nature to God; every thing that distinguishes the true Christian from a world lying in wickedness? It is, in fact, a desecration of all that is most holy and undefiled in the religion of Christ, even to its very words and denominations.

In his tract on *conversion*, Dr. Mant labours still more directly to destroy all serious views, and just feelings in religion; to give the death-blow to all spiritual, all personal religion. He rakes into bishop Lavington's kennel, and thence extracts the mire of misrepresentation and calumny, wherewith to stain and darken every thing in the shape of evangelical piety, in whatever Christian denomination it may be found. Being a protestant bishop, Dr. Mant ought to know, that the quarrel of infidel and wicked men has always been with the sincere and consistent profession and practice of an humble, self-denying, self-devoted religion. Deists and atheists have no radical objection to a churchman, provided he be a formalist, and hates all practical piety, with as perfect a hatred as their own. *Their* virulence is directed against the real believers in Christianity, of whatever sect, because the holy life of such persons puts to shame their own unrighteous deeds. But what is there to offend an infidel, whether speculative or practical, in bishop Mant's twin tracts on regeneration and conversion?

What wisdom was there in attempting to revive questions and doctrines, and contentions, which every sound divine, since the Reformation, has laboured to compose in the spirit of Christian charity? Dr. Mant has *not* proved, nor will he ever be able to prove his positions on any Scriptural, or protestant, or church of England grounds.

Most probably he will not attempt it; seeing that theology, and more especially controversy, is *not* his *forte*. But *whose* hands has he strengthened by these lucubrations? *not* those of the Anglican Church, whose bread he eats, and whose dignities have been heaped upon him; no; but he *has* strengthened the hands of the papist, of the protestant dissenter, of every one who desires the overthrow of the English ecclesiastical establishment.

The papist might well rejoice, that the protestant barrier, raised by the English reformers against the papal doctrine of the sacraments, is now attempted to be beaten down by a bishop of the Anglican Church. The protestant dissenter might well justify his separation from the establishment, if it hold such a fundamental article of the popish creed. Nay, Dr. Mant has actually referred to the authority of the nonconformist ministers, who stated, as a ground of their nonconformity, that the church of England clearly teaches the doctrine of a real baptismal regeneration. An imputation, which the greatest and best divines of the Anglican Church have always indignantly repelled.

If these baptismal regeneration doctors be correct in their exposition of the public formularies of the church of England, was the great earl of Chatham wrong, when he thundered forth in the house of Lords, "we have a Calvinistic creed, an Arminian clergy, and a popish liturgy"?

Non tali auxilio; we do not need bishop Mant, or any other bishop, priest, or deacon, now, in the nineteenth century, to inform us, that the public services of the Anglican Church are *not yet* under-

stood: and that the illustrious divines, who compiled the liturgy, and framed the articles, and composed the homilies, and all their ablest, wisest, best successors, during a period of nearly three hundred years, have been mistaken in their mode of expounding them.

Indeed, the great dragon of formalism, in our American churches, has been heard to exclaim, that the first reformers did *not* understand the articles of the English Church, and in the homilies, through mistake, gave them an erroneous interpretation. That is to say, the first English reformers, some of the best and brightest lights which ever burned in Christendom, did *not* understand the articles framed by themselves.

This, in fundamental verity, is the *argumentum ad modestiam*. Thou child and champion of formalism! suppose I were to say to you, "Sir, the self same sermon, which you wrote, and preached twice, in two different churches, on the last Sunday, about the venial errors and slight imperfections of human nature; the sufficiency of human works, if performed within the pale of your own church; the necessity of avoiding all communion in matters purely religious, with uncovenanted people, and the duty of execrating all approach to the doctrines of grace; neither you nor your parishioners, understand; but some three hundred years hence, a set of men will arise in the church, who will undertake to prove, that you knew nothing at all about your own miserable discourse; that you, to be sure, intended it for a dull, sober, Pelagian, pagan, formal, high church, Sabbatical essay, without one single ray of Christian truth in any part of it; but in reality it was, *mirabile dictu*, quite a Scriptural and evangelical address!"

"Quid rides? mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur."

That we might not err in our notions respecting *what* portion of the church of England clergy really

tend, by their labours, to support, or overthrow that church; whether the baptismal regeneration formalists, or the evangelical ministers in the establishment, the Eclectic Review for the year 1816 has kindly provided. The reviewer, taking precisely the position of Dr. Mant, says, that one of the reasons assigned by the ejected ministers at the restoration of Charles the second, for refusing to sign the declaration, was, that the common prayer book teaches the doctrine of real baptismal regeneration, and certain salvation consequent thereon. And, assuming that the nonconformists were correct in their assertion, the reviewer pronounces bishop Tomline, Dr. Mant, and all the baptismal regeneration champions, to be the only consistent churchmen.

The Eclectic Review professedly supports evangelical religion and doctrine; and on Scriptural grounds condemns baptismal regeneration, as a popish and anti-christian tenet. But as some of the chief writers in that journal are resolute *enemies* to all alliance between the church and state, they eagerly seize on Mant and Tomline, and their fellows, as competent and credible witnesses to prove, that the Anglican Church establishment is antisciptural and popish; and *therefore* must be removed, in order to substitute Scriptural and protestant Christianity.

And doubtless in the present state and condition of the English people, if they *can* be induced to believe, that the national church really maintains popish and unscriptural doctrines respecting the sacraments, they will speedily send that church, and all her clerical children, to follow the fortunes of the second James, and his male progeny.

To Dr. Mant belongs the unenviable distinction of having revived the Romish doctrine of baptismal regeneration more openly, and more grossly, than any other writer, by courtesy, called protestant; nor would it be easy for a popish priest himself to express the tenets of his own church more explicitly on this point; in peculiar opposition to which the

English reformers endured the agony of martyrdom. For example, even in his latter academic sermons, he informs us, that in baptism the Spirit “infuses into us a principle of life; that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit; such we become by our spiritual regeneration, by our new birth in the sacrament of baptism.” The Spirit “moveth upon the face of the baptismal waters imparting to them a quickening power.” It is the duty of the minister “to wash the sinner in the laver of regeneration, and to be the instrument of admitting him into filiation with God:” “to baptism he (Christ) promises salvation.” Christ declares, that the bread and wine of the holy communion *are* “his body and blood,” and so forth.

When these, and sentiments such as these, are openly promulgated by the church of England clergy, of all orders and degrees; and when those who labour to bring back the Scriptural doctrines of the Reformation, as embodied in the liturgy, articles, and homilies of that church, in opposition to these horrible impieties, are branded as puritan gospellers, methodists, Calvinists, dissenters, seditionists, and the like; is it a ground of marvel, that the English ecclesiastical establishment has a bad odour in the nostrils of all honest men? that every one who reads and believes the word of God, shrinks with loathing from such popish and pagan mockeries?

Well may the dissenters lift up their voices, and sharpen their spears against a heathen hierarchy. And yet Dr. Mant, with a truly infantile simplicity, utters a feeble shriek of lamentation over, what he calls, “a much injured, perhaps a falling church.” Now, is there a single individual, not even excepting bishops Tomline and Marsh, in the present age, who has contributed *so much*, in proportion to his power, to her actual injury and impending fall, as Richard Mant himself? Has not he stricken his knife into her vitals, and rendered her an object of scorn and derision to all her enemies?

The British government, doubtless, in order to show to the world the essential benefits of an inseparable alliance between church and state, in promoting the best interests of pure and undefiled religion, have actually made an Irish bishop of Mant; as a reward for having laboured incessantly and with all his might, to fasten the stain of popery on a church professedly protestant. The rulers of Britain have only to persevere in promoting such clerical champions; and continue to their bishops the power of suspending curates *ad libitum*, and of refusing to countersign the testimonials of all presentees, who may happen to preach the Gospel; and they will soon have a national church, composed altogether of formalists.

But then they will not long be troubled with their politico-clerical establishment; for the people of England will never endure, staggering as they are under so many other national burdens, to be laden with an annual tax of fifty millions of dollars, to support a church, whose clergy, in defiance of its evangelical creed, labour so strenuously to render it unscriptural and antisciptural, unchristian and anti-christian, by substituting merely external ordinances, and rites, and ceremonies, for a living faith, and a holy life.

If Mant and his peers be correct in their interpretation of the public formularies of the Anglican Church, the sooner such a church is stubbed up, root and branch, and burned in unquenchable fire, the better. Nor need we be alarmed at the probable number of *martyrs* among the state clergy, in the event of the dissolution of a church reduced to the deplorable condition of entire formalism.

In the hour of her extremity, it will be found, that a formal hierarchy and a formal clergy, clustering in all decent debility around the altars of the Anglican Church, will *not* be able to prolong her existence. If the British government deem the preservation of the national church of any importance to the state,

it ought to know, that the *only* possible mode of preserving the establishment, is to fill its palaces and parishes with an evangelical ministry. Then no apprehension need be entertained of the growth, either of sectaries, or of radicals, which at present strikes so much terror into the ruling powers.

Let the sovereigns of Britain make the experiment of introducing evangelical clergymen into the bishoprics and benefices of the national church; and they will soon be secure from all alarms of sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion; of all false doctrine, heresy and schism; of hardness of heart, and contempt of God's word and commandment.

Whoever wishes to see the consequences of a *general* diffusion of infidelity most forcibly and impressively exhibited, may read "the Radical's Saturday night;" in the sixth volume of Blackwood's Magazine, one of the ablest and most eloquent effusions in the English language.

In the mean time, it is a source of sincere congratulation, that the flame of protestant piety is *not yet* entirely extinguished in the Anglican Church; and if the little remnant of evangelism, still existing in that overgrown body of formality, will but faithfully persevere in defending and enforcing the truly Scriptural doctrines of the liturgy, articles and homilies, framed by the reformers, that church may yet, under the blessing of divine Providence, still survive, and triumph over all the open attacks of her avowed enemies; and over what is infinitely worse, and far more dangerous, all the expositions and interpolations of her formal friends. Amen! *esto perpetua!*
αἰὲν ἀπὸ στενῶν!

In these United States, the printed efforts in favour of baptismal regeneration, have been but few, and faint, and feeble, and far between. In the "Washington Theological Repertory," for January and February 1821, this subject is discussed. And the writer fully and clearly proves that spiritual, *not* baptismal re-

generation, is the doctrine, alike of the Scriptures and of the public formularies of the protestant episcopal church.

A plain man might ask, how the baptismal regeneration doctors, on *their* scheme, can account for the subsequent conversion of baptized people; for example, of such persons as Halyburton, Gardiner, Newton, Vanderkemp, Henry Martyn, and an innumerable multitude of others? do the formalists *dare* to assert, that many of the ablest and wisest men that have ever enlightened and adorned the world, were weak enthusiasts and blind fanatics, in comparison with their own snow broth apprehensions? And how, upon *their* mode of interpretation, do they explain the fact, of the feelings, and language, and conduct, of the converted, the spiritually regenerated being substantially the same in all ages, and in every clime?

The universal experience of time and truth shows, that, whenever any one becomes a real, a regenerated Christian, the whole temper and character of his mind are so changed as to become different from those of the generality of mankind, and from what itself was, while yet unenlightened and unrenewed. It is *not* merely a little circumstantial alteration; not the assuming a new name; nor the professing new speculative opinions; nor the practising new rites, and forms, and ceremonies and ordinances; but the becoming a different creature, a *new* man, in that Scriptural sense, wherein the characteristics of regeneration are opposed to circumcision and uncircumcision, and all the bare externals of religious profession; and wherein the utter insufficiency of the last, and the absolute necessity of the first, are distinctly declared.

The truly regenerate have new apprehensions, new affections, new resolutions, new labours, new enjoyments, new hopes; all of which prove them to have become spiritual, and separate from the apprehensions, affections, resolutions, labours, enjoyments,

and hopes of the worldling and formalist, in consequence of the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts. Now will any formalist stand up, and declare in the face of the day, that such are the characteristics of *all* the episcopally baptized?

How do the formalists, upon *their* theory, account for the conversion of men, *after* they have taken orders, and have ministered in the sanctuary; of which both the Anglican and American-Anglo-Churches can exhibit illustrious examples? These persons had all been regularly baptized; and *before* their regeneration or conversion had led as decent moral lives, in all exterior circumstances, as did ever any of those formalists, who have gone, or are now hastening to their own place.

The venerable Thomas Scott, in his "Force of Truth," has given to the world an awfully solemn account of the steps, by which it pleased a gracious Providence to lead him from the darkest depths of clerical formalism, into the regions of evangelical light and truth. In "the Washington Theological Repertory," for May and June 1820, Mr. Scott's narrative is interestingly and instructively reviewed.

The conversion of the Rev. Joseph Milner, the historian of the church of Christ, is stated, with great force and effect, by dean Isaac Milner, in his life of his brother. The dean says, that in illustrating the doctrines of regeneration, or new birth, and of justification by faith, Mr. Milner exerted all his great powers. Such preaching was offensive to many, who called it fanaticism, a word of convenient latitude to express the hatred of formalists to all evangelical truth.

But the preacher's learning and knowledge of the Scriptures secured his authority; his vehement eloquence commanded attention, and his manifest affection for his people, and tender regard for their immortal interests, gradually elicited their esteem and gratitude. A common objection to the *doctrines of*

grace is, that if mankind are so depraved by nature, as to have no power to do good, they cannot be responsible for their actions. But Mr. Milner never meddled with the metaphysical subtleties that have darkened this inquiry; in the pulpit, he always confined himself to the Scripture account of the matter. He constantly taught the necessity of the efficacious operation of the Holy Ghost, in restoring to the depraved nature of fallen man the lost image of God; but, at the same time, inculcated the important duty of employing proper means to obtain the proposed end.

He maintained, that the spirit of God did not operate on the minds of men, as if they were inert matter or mechanical engines; but that the blessed effects took place always in the use of our rational faculties, and consistently with every notion of the freedom of the human will, to which any clear and satisfactory meaning can be assigned.

Regeneration, in its Scriptural sense, is a prevailing disposition of the soul to universal holiness, produced and cherished by the influences of God's spirit on the heart, operating in a manner suitable to the constitution of man, as a rational and responsible being. Now does baptismal regeneration *always* ensure such a result? and, if it fail in *one* single instance, the inseparability, the necessary connexion between baptism and regeneration is destroyed, and the whole theory of Dr. Mant falls to the ground.

Those preachers who encourage men to hope for salvation, because they have been *regularly* baptized in infancy; have duly attended on public worship; hold a stout, orthodox creed, and do no bodily harm to their neighbours; are themselves travelling, and are directing their followers, along a very broad, but a very dangerous road. For real spiritual regeneration implies much more than this, namely: that our hope and confidence are in Christ, not in ourselves; and that if we desire to be interested in the righteousness which *he* has wrought out, and in

the blessings which *he* has purchased by his sacred blood, we must be *experimentally* acquainted with the work of God's renewing grace upon our souls, transforming us into the image of his holiness. Is this the case with *all* episcopally baptized infants?

Formalists accuse evangelical ministers of encouraging sin by their preaching, and yet of being too strict in their prohibitions of innocent amusements. But it is hard to reconcile these two accusations together. Truly, the legs of the lame are not equal. Formalists, with their everlasting prelections about good works, and their dread of evangelical faith and sinfulness, admit any profane worldling to the communion table, provided he exercise as much prudence as the late Lord chancellor Thurlow, of whom it is said, that there were only two places in which he did not habitually and constantly curse and swear, to wit: the church and the house of Lords; but that he was always heard to growl out his oaths in the church porch, and in the lobby of the peers' chamber.

A very eminent divine of the present day, who, in his own person, has experienced the awful distance between formalism and Christianity, having once been an unconverted, though baptized philosopher, but now a regenerated believer, has recently poured the light of his head and heart upon this subject. He has forcibly depicted the difference between mere water baptism and spiritual regeneration; between a Christian and a formalist; and has also shown the opposition, which pure and undefiled religion must always meet from an unbelieving world, whether baptized or not.

According to the teachings of this great master in Israel, in every genuine disciple of Christ, we not only see one, who delivered from the burden of his fears, rejoices in hope of a coming glory; but one, who, set free from the bondage of corruption, and animated by a new love, and a new desire, is honest

in the purposes, strenuous in the efforts, abundant in the works of obedience. He feels the instigations of sin, and thus differs from an angel. But he follows not those instigations, and thus differs from a natural, or unconverted man. So that in him, we view one struggling, with effect, against his earth-born propensities, and yet hateful to himself for their existence; holier and yet humbler than those around him; realizing from time to time, a positive increase in grace and excellence, and yet more tenderly conscious of his remaining deformities; gradually expanding in attainment, as well as in desire, towards the light and liberty of heaven, and yet groaning under a yoke, from which death alone can fully emancipate him.

There is a morality of this world directly opposed to the humbling representations of the Gospel; which cannot comprehend what is meant by the utter worthlessness and depravity of our nature; which repels with anger such a statement, in the full consciousness of its own superiority to the sordid, the profligate, and the dishonourable; which is fortified in resisting the truth as it is in Jesus, by flattering testimonials to *its own* respectability and worth, from the various quarters of human society. A just sense of the *extent* of God's claim upon his own creatures, would teach formalists, that to do some things for their neighbours, is *not* doing all things for their Maker; that a natural principle of honesty to man, is quite distinct from a principle of entire devotedness to God; that the tithe bestowed upon others, is *not* an equivalent for a total dedication to God of themselves, and of all that they have; that they may present those around them with many offerings of kindness, and *not* present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, which is their reasonable service; that they may earn a cheap and easy credit for virtues which will satisfy the world, and yet be entire strangers to the self-denial, the spirituality, the mortification of every earthly desire, and the affec-

tion for things above; *all* of which graces enter, as essential ingredients, into the sanctification of the Gospel.

We mistake egregiously, if we suppose, that the *offence* of the cross has ceased from our land. The persecution of contempt, of ridicule, of misrepresentation, of calumny, on the part of the openly profane and profligate infidel, the more decorous worldling, and the decent formalist, is *still* the appointed trial of all who would live godly, and of all who would zealously and honestly expound the doctrines of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Christianity is, at this very hour, the same peculiar system which it was in the days of the apostles; and as much signalizes and separates its followers from a world lying in wickedness and unbelief. The reproach cast upon Paul, that he was mad, because he was an intrepid follower of Christ, is *still* preferred against every faithful teacher, and every consistent disciple of the Christian faith, and under the significant watchwords of "methodism, and fanaticism, and Calvinism," a hostile and an unbelieving world is always ready to discharge from its innumerable batteries, as abundant a shower of invective and contumely *now*, as in the first ages of Christianity.

Indeed, all formalists, of whatever religious denomination, are alike especially full of perfect hatred to evangelical truth, doctrine, and practice. For example, the formal Calvinist accuses his minister of being a *legalist*, if he enforce the practical duties of a holy life and conversation as enjoined in the sacred Scriptures. And the formal Arminian calls his clergyman a *Calvinist*, if he set forth the doctrines of grace, to wit: original sin; spiritual, *not* baptismal regeneration, and justification by faith.

Both these contradictory charges arise from the same dislike of evangelical truth and doctrine; although appearing in different forms. The formal Calvinist wishes to rest on his doctrinal orthodoxy alone, and not to be reminded of his neglect of the

practical duties of Christianity, and his habitual perseverance in forbidden and known sins. The formal Arminian desires to claim some merit from *his own* works of righteousness, and is offended with those truly Scriptural tenets, which declare the humbling lesson of man's utter inability to accomplish his own salvation, which is wrought out *entirely* by the sacrifice, the righteousness, and the intercession of the Lord Christ; and which place good works in their proper and subordinate station, as the *evidence* of a living faith.

In truth, the distinguishing characteristics of full formalism are, the divesting religion of all its spirituality, and reducing it to a mere secular scheme of external ordinances, rites, and ceremonies; the *being* conformed to the world; the paying constant court to the rich and powerful, and *not* preaching the Gospel to the poor.

How far such a system coincides with Christianity, any one who reads the Bible may discover. But all this, and much more than all this, necessarily results from enforcing the popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration; which is the chief corner stone of the unscriptural building of formalists. The children of this world, however, are wiser in their generation than the children of light; and the formalists studiously *coinciding* with, instead of opposing the natural depravity of the human heart, and hardened by the deceitfulness of their own sinful self-righteousness, are always gathering coadjutors and supporters out of that world, which, according to the express declaration of Holy Writ, lieth in wickedness, without God, and without Christ, and without hope; as to all *spiritual* things; the things that belong unto our everlasting peace.

Nor is this any new thing under the sun; for *all* secular, unregenerate priests, whether baptized or not, in all ages, and in all countries of the world, have pursued the *same* scheme of personal ambition, and self-aggrandizement; and have made the same

incessant efforts to stifle all religious feeling, and all conscientious devotion in the surrounding community.

For example, the pontiffs and soothsayers of pagan Rome; the priests of Baal, who corrupted the Israelites; the Brahmuns, who have entailed superstition, and lust, and cruelty, upon the miserable millions of Hindusthan; the papal hierarchy, which kept all Europe down in darkness, tears and blood, through the long period of a thousand years; and the protestant formal clergy of England's established church, who, during the reign of the Tudors, and the Stuarts, visited all evangelism with fine, and imprisonment, and pillory, and the scourge, and the gallows; and who, since the expulsion of the second James, have persecuted all Gospel truth, and all practical piety, to, *at least*, the full extent permitted by the existing laws.

Hence, with the intervention of a single epithet, Dryden's position is correct, for *formal* "priests of all religions *are* alike."

In Mr. Fletcher's "Appeal," the reader may find some very instructive and interesting facts and observations on original sin, spiritual regeneration, and the preposterous conceits of unconverted formalists, as to *their own* goodness. In this original and eloquent work, the truly evangelical writer proves his positions, at large, from the Scriptures, in the words of the prophets, the apostles, and the Lord Christ: and from the express declarations of the liturgy, articles, and homilies of the Anglican Church.

In addition to which, man is considered as an inhabitant of the natural, a citizen of the moral, a pilgrim in the Christian world. And the whole is closed with important spiritual inferences, and earnest exhortations to an harmonious union of a living faith with a loving obedience to God's holy law; steering alike clear of the equally ruinous, though opposite errors of the immoral antinomian, and the self-righteous formalist.

I had almost forgotten to mention bishop Kay's

novel argument in support of *baptismal* regeneration. In his primary charge, delivered in 1821, as diocesan of Bristol, he says, that *this* doctrine would be generally believed in England, *if* it were not for the custom of baptizing children in private houses, instead of churches. Does Dr. Kay think that the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit so depend upon time and place, as to operate in a building, called a church, and to be ineffectual in a building called a house? This question, however, is needless, because our baptismal regeneration men do *not* allow any spiritual efficacy to baptism performed in *unconsecrated* meeting-houses, by nonepiscopalians whose administration of every Christian ordinance is *pronounced* to be *unauthorized* and *invalid*.

THE END.

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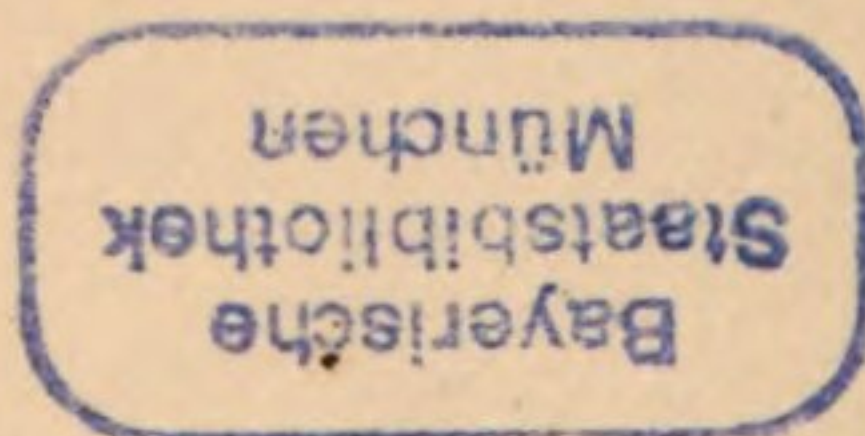
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